

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Vol. 144

JANUARY, 1955

No. 863

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

ESSAY ON PROSE. I.

WALTER DE LA MARE

ABOLISH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

YES

JENNIE LEE

NO

VERY REVD. C. A. ALINGTON

FARMERS AND FREE MARKETS JAMES RAMSDEN

WALTON BREAKS SILENCE

MARTIN COOPER

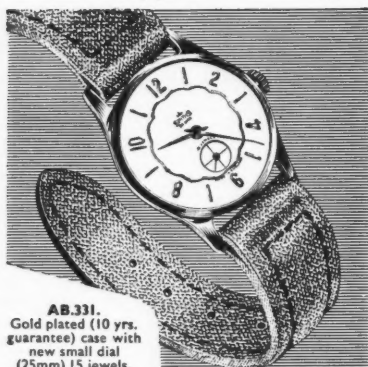
BRITISH SOCCER TO-DAY

SIR STANLEY ROUS

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY DENYS SMITH, M. R. K.
BURGE, ERIC GILLET, JULIAN SYMONS, ANTHONY STEEL,
MARTIN LINDSAY, VAL GIELGUD, MILWARD KENNEDY,
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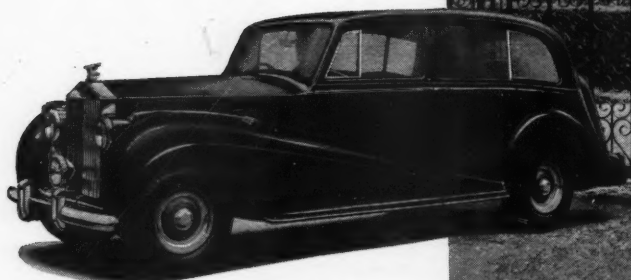
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EPISODES OF THE MONTH

HAPPY New Year" is a wish more often expressed than fulfilled, but every year we say it, most sincerely, to our friends and hope that they will not be too unpleasantly disillusioned.

On the whole, 1954 might have been much worse than it was. A truce was achieved in the world's ideological struggle, in the sense that actual fighting ceased. Some are saying that this is only a "phoney" truce, very much to the advantage of our enemies. But others are convinced that the prospects of a lasting peace are now distinctly brighter, if only because the principal belligerents would have so little to gain from a thermo-nuclear war.

At home the year provided further evidence that the Government's economic policies are sound, though the irresolute handling of the dock strike will be reflected in bad trading figures for the last quarter. The threat of an American recession, which caused much uneasiness in the early part of the year, and had its effect upon the Budget, fortunately failed to materialize.

1955 : Election Year ?

THIS year may well be marked by a General Election in the United Kingdom. The Queen's Speech—which would anyway have received less attention than usual on November 30, because of the Prime Minister's birthday celebrations—was a very colourless document, and political wiseacres were not slow to draw the conclusion that the Government would go to the country in the autumn. There is not as a rule much legislative activity during the last Session of a Parliament, and the Queen's Speech certainly foreshadowed the bare minimum of legislation.

Pensions Bill: A Limited Objective

THIS Bill, which should be law by the time we go to press, will have the effect of increasing contributions and benefits payable under the National Insurance Scheme. In form and purpose it is pure "Beveridge." It departs in no important respect from the Beveridge plan as it was put

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into effect by Parliament in 1946. The Act imposed upon the Minister the duty of reviewing both benefits and contributions after consideration of a five-yearly report by the Government Actuary. This Mr. Peake has now done and among the results will be the raising of the retirement pension to a level which is a little above what was intended in 1946, after taking into account the change in the value of money. Thus the main criticisms which have been levelled against this measure all assume, as their ground, that the methods adopted in 1946 are inadequate for the problems with which they deal, and should be changed in some way. Whether the Bill is to be regarded as a permanent and important contribution to the growth of social legislation, or just as a stop-gap, will depend on whether or not it is felt that the present institution of National Insurance is one which needs to be radically changed.

Criticism Misdirected

THERE is the general criticism that the Bill, which was held up to await the appearance of the Phillips Report, gives effect to none of the Phillips Committee's recommendations. But it was the Actuary's report, not that of the Phillips Committee, which the Minister was bound by statute to await. Moreover, the latter is solidly behind the Bill in one most important particular: not a single one of those who gave evidence before the Phillips Committee advocated abolishing the contributory element in National Insurance, which the Bill reaffirms.

We must deal briefly with the specific point of criticism that, because the National Assistance scales are not increased by as much as retirement pension rates, those now on National Assistance, who most need help, will in fact benefit the least; all but half a crown of what goes on the retirement pension comes off the supplementary allowance. This again is because the Bill, rightly or wrongly, simply rehabilitates Beveridge. The Beveridge intention was that the contributory pension awarded "as of right" should be the staple means towards subsistence, even for the worst off people, and not the National Assistance pension which is awarded after a means test. But Beveridge rightly concluded that the factor of rent, which varies so much between one pensioner and another, would make it impossible to lay down a standard rate of near-subsistence which, as well as being uniform in its application, would be uniform in its effect. An important function of the National Assistance Board was thus to make an extra allowance for rent. But after 1946 the cost of living rose rapidly and outstripped such changes in the rate of the contributory pension as Parliament made from time to time. As a result National Assistance, where the allowance was increased more generously, became as important a factor in subsistence and allowed for much else besides rent.

The Bill now restores the position as it was when Beveridge came in. It may be wrong to do so. This question, and the other criticisms of the existing institution of National Insurance as a method of providing for old age, will be for the Government's consideration after the Recess.

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

Eccles Gets to Work

AN outstanding feature of the Debate on the Address was the speech in which the new Minister of Education, Sir David Eccles, after chivalrously defending the work of his predecessor, outlined his own preliminary moves.

He showed that he was giving the local authorities every encouragement to improve and repair bad school buildings, and in particular he was planning to eliminate "all-age" schools in the countryside. "In future," he said, "it will be my Ministry who asks the counties to do more, and the counties who, on occasion, may have to tell us why they cannot do more. I am sure that we shall both enjoy that reversal of our traditional rôles." (Perhaps the Minister will enjoy it more than the counties!)

He will also facilitate the provision of playing fields, village halls and community centres. And he was able to announce that an extra £2½ million a year would be available for expanding technical education, the importance of which he stressed. A number of German Members of Parliament, he said, who had recently inspected our schools and colleges, remarked at the end of their visit that we were far ahead of Germany in every department except technical education, where, "in both the variety and the number of courses, we were far behind."

Future of the Public Schools

SIR DAVID ECCLES did not mention in his speech one aspect of British education, the public schools, which are the subject of discussion in this issue between Miss Jennie Lee and Dr. Alington. Yet these schools cannot be ignored by any Minister of Education to whom the words "progress" and "democracy" have any meaning.

Towards the end of the war a committee presided over by Lord Fleming recommended that the public schools—i.e. (for the purposes of this argument) the independent fee-paying secondary schools, which are not receiving direct grants from the Government—should be prepared to accept up to 25 per cent. of their intake from the State primary schools. The Fleming scheme has never been put into effect on a national scale, but some local authorities have made arrangements with some public schools, under which a very limited number of primary school boys have been sent to Eton, Harrow, etc. The experiment, so far as the boys and the schools are concerned, has been a striking success and has completely disproved the theory that different "types" of boy, or boys from different backgrounds, will not mix. But unfortunately the financing of the scheme has not been undertaken as a national responsibility, with the result that the total numbers involved have been very small, because local authorities are reluctant to incur unpopularity by spending a lot of money on comparatively few children.

Analogy of the Older Universities

THIS is much to be regretted, but the moral is clear: the Government must tackle the job itself, in close and, if possible, friendly co-operation with the public schools. Nor should the Fleming limit of 25 per cent. be regarded as adequate; at least 50 per cent. of the public school population, if not more, should come from the primary schools and should be paid for by the State.

If the public schools were to develop along these lines they would only be following the example which has already been set by the older Universities. Oxford and Cambridge, and their ancient Colleges, have lost neither their freedom nor their power for good by the drastic change in their composition which has occurred during the last hundred years. On the contrary, they have probably gained as much in prestige as they have gained in usefulness to the community.

In a sense the public schools are the "older universities" of the secondary school system, and they should progress accordingly. By so doing they would preserve their vital traditions for the benefit not of a class, but of the whole nation.

Leaders Must be Trained

TO Miss Jennie Lee the solution we favour is objectionable, because "it perpetuates the principle of segregation, the training of a leadership *élite* apart from the general run of schoolchildren," and because it would remove "from the State-maintained secondary schools some of their brightest pupils."

Of course this is true, but how otherwise can talent be given its fair chance? All higher education presupposes a degree of segregation; if not, why should Miss Lee, rather than some other Scottish girl less intelligent and spirited than herself, have gone to Edinburgh University? Why should Mr. Aneurin Bevan have been sent to the Central Labour College—a privilege which all miners' sons could not share?

Leadership, and the need for leaders, are facts which cannot be blinked. Justice consists not in giving every child exactly the same opportunity, but in giving to each the opportunity which he (or she) deserves and for which he (or she) is fitted by nature.

Shift in American Foreign Policy

IT goes without saying that the greatest danger to world peace lies in the revolutionary creed of Communism. Insofar as the rulers of Russia and China are still dominated by that creed, and are still working to conquer or subvert those countries which are not Communist, they are the most likely cause of Armageddon.

But it is one of the paradoxes of life that the innocent, no less than the guilty, may be responsible for disaster; and it is for that reason that the

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vagueness of American anti-Communism has been viewed with deep concern by this country and by other allies of the United States. More especially it has been felt that in the Far East American policy has lacked the absolute clarity and realism without which the noblest intentions can sometimes produce the direst consequences.

Recently, however, there has been a noticeable shift in American policy, and perhaps the most important symptom of this has been the mutual defence treaty signed, in the early part of December, between the United States and the Chiang Kai Shek Government. It may still be regretted that the Americans should have committed themselves so far in support of a government which represents only the irreclaimable, and not altogether desirable, past, and in defence of an island which is not strategically vital to the free world. But there is much comfort in the fact that now, at last, the American obligation to Chiang Kai Shek has been defined and the line of demarcation between peace and war made relatively precise and clear-cut.

President's New Strength

THE reasons for this development are no doubt fairly complex, but one of them must certainly be the slow effect of Sir Winston Churchill's oracular guidance. Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles may at first have been reluctant to accept the full logic of his views on co-existence, but they are both men who can learn from experience, and the least mortifying conversions are those which occur gradually, over a period of time.

Another factor has been the mid-term Congressional elections, the result of which, though it was unfavourable to the President's party, may well have given new strength to the President himself. Less may now be heard of Senator Knowland, whose muddled and cocksure opinions on foreign affairs were a poor accompaniment to Eisenhower's diplomacy. Less may also be heard of the extreme wing of the Republican Party, which for a time had seemed to be forcing even the White House into a state of impotence or vacillation. The McCarthy school of thought was so thumpingly discredited at the polls that Eisenhower may now feel free to lead his party openly and unmistakably as a liberal and internationalist. Appearing thus in his true colours, it is probable that he will be re-elected in 1956, even if the extremists decide to run a rival candidate.

New Prime Minister of South Africa

DR. MALAN was not after all succeeded as Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa by Mr. Havenga, but by Mr. Strydom, who has always been regarded as one of the most uncompromising of the Nationalist leaders. It is too early to say whether or not he will prove in action as extreme as some of his past utterances might suggest. We can only now note that he will not be attending the forthcoming Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers.

Spectator Changes Hands

A REFRESHING event in the life of the periodical press has been the appearance of Mr. Ian Gilmour, first as controlling shareholder, and now as Editor, of *The Spectator*. This famous weekly stands for independence, and Mr. Gilmour is independent in every sense of the word. But this does not mean that he is neutral or mugwumpish; his views, though they may change, are always definite, and his mind, though open, is never vacant or sterile.

He is, in fact, a man of unusual quality and there is every reason to hope that he will make a great reputation for himself in British journalism. He combines seriousness and levity in just about the right proportions; he respects tradition, yet is zealous for reform. Belonging to the *jeunesse dorée*, he is a reproach alike to its harsher critics and to its more typical members. He has most of the virtues, and very few of the faults, which are normally associated with the word "gentleman."

The National and English Review

ON December 1, Lord Altrincham, whose health has not been good, formally resigned the editorship of the *Review* and was succeeded by Mr. John Grigg, who has been Assistant Editor since December 1948 and Associate Editor since January 1953.

In practical terms, the new arrangement will make no difference, because it has existed for some time in all but name. Besides, Lord Altrincham's vast experience and enthusiastic interest will not be lost to the *Review*, because he has a more than nodding acquaintance with the present Editor!

It is hardly for us to lead the cheers, but we are very confident that Lord Altrincham's services to the *Review*, during the last six years, have been warmly appreciated and that all our readers will wish him well. He has been in his time soldier, Civil Servant, courtier, Colonial Governor, Member of Parliament and Minister of the Crown, as well as journalist and editor. Now he has to be less active than he would like to be, but he will never forgo mental, or even physical, effort. Some men at his age are content to relax quietly and survey the past; to him such resignation is abhorrent. He continues to live in the present and to speculate about the future, in an anxious but not unhopeful spirit.

ESSAY ON PROSE. I.

By WALTER DE LA MARE

THERE is a little class of English words that somehow remain just outside our ordinary familiar talk and conversation.

They are not exactly technical terms, they are not purely literary, and they are not included in Mr. Fowler's three lists of "barbarisms," "pomposities," and "genteelisms." Yet we should look twice perhaps at a stranger whom we heard using them somewhat demonstratively in a railway carriage. One of these is the word "prose." That it has few friends is evident from its derivatives, prosy and prosaic. Rather than either one would be taken for an unreclaimable high-brow or blue-stocking. And yet we all know by heart one line (if very little else) of the French play, with the gentleman named Jourdain in it. What, then, is the meaning of the word?

Prose, says Webster's dictionary, "is the ordinary language of men in speaking or writing"; and it is derived from a Latin word, meaning straightforward. The definition could hardly be clearer for all general purposes. How find a sounder substitute? Yet the more closely we examine it, the less far it seems to take us. Its "ordinary," it would seem, is intended to colour the whole of it. Prose, that is, is the ordinary language of ordinary men in ordinary speaking and ordinary writing; since the language of extraordinary men can hardly help being, if only in its simplicity, less ordinary than that of ordinary men. So too will the language of ordinary men in their extraordinary moments. And since, unlike conversation, a piece of writing is seldom the work of men, but of one man, our definition perhaps is not yet quite exact enough. Nor is the objection the

mere quibble it may seem.

Difficulty still awaits us if we approach the question from the other side. We might infer that the language which is not prose must in some respects be extraordinary; and apart from bad grammar and what is called bad language, apart from dialect, and the broken tongue of the foreigner, the only other language to which the term might seem to apply is that of poetry. Indeed, the two terms—prose, poetry—are still frequently used as if they were opposites the one of the other; and this in spite of Wordsworth's famous Preface to his *Lyrical Ballads*. In defence of their workaday diction against its critics, he maintained that there neither is nor can be any essential difference, except with reference to metre, between the language of prose and that of metrical composition. And although Coleridge tried to refute this statement, his own finest work seems admirably to support it. It was Coleridge himself too, in agreement with Wordsworth, who asserted that the real antithesis of poetry is not prose, but pure matter-of-fact, or science.

So far, then, prose on the formal side—the how it says what it says—is that kind of speaking and writing which is not definitely metrical. On the material side—the what it says—prose is that kind of speaking and writing which can convey anything from poetry to the purest science.

Still, such useful and metrical little jingles as

Thirty days have September,
April, June, and November . . .

and

Common are to either sex,
Artifex, and opifex . . .

are only a very little less matter-of-fact in effect because they are metrical. As for our old sovran nursery scrap of weather wisdom:

A red sky at night is the shepherd's delight,
A red sky at morning is the shepherd's warning,

which, provided only that our western heavens are the right kind of red, expresses genuine matter-of-fact, it is tinged through and through with poetry. And what of Ben Jonson's

Follow a shadow, it still flies you;
Seem to fly it, it will pursue;
So court a mistress, she denies you;
Let her alone, she will court you.
Say, are not women truly, then,
Styled but the shadows of us men?—

counsel how nimble, how comforting, how memorable, how subtly metrical, and yet how dismally matter-of-fact.

None the less, for prose at its least poetical we are bidden to look to science. Let us take for a specimen, then, this autopsy of the word "moss." "Moss," says Webster, "is any bryophytic plant of the class Musci, characterized by small, leafy, open, tufted stems, bearing antheridia and archegonia, the oöspores of which develop into naked stalked capsules bearing asexual spores."

Now this perfectly straightforward statement, we may assume, expresses as pure and unpolluted a matter-of-fact as the human mind and the English language are capable of. What are its qualities? First, though as Dr. Johnson declared, no words are hard words as soon as we know what they mean, it is certainly not the ordinary language of ordinary men in speaking or writing. Next, since it summarizes a vast range of human enquiry, it is no less comprehensive than it is condensed. The mosses of the whole world, from pole to pole, have been cribbed within this tiny fold, and it flatly excludes (at least

for the time being) any exception which may prove—that is, test—the rule. Here presumably is all that man knows that is common to every thing which deserves to be called moss. Moreover, as a definition it shows as little trace of individual human workmanship as an equation in algebra, or a proposition in geometry. Unlike Milton's idea of poetry, it has only a vague effect upon the senses; however concise it may be, none but an expert could affirm that it is simple; it is wholly innocent of the passionate; and no doubt it is an admirable example of its kind. Such then, in its simple intensity, is the prose of the matter-of-fact or science. It is the medium—more or less dilated—of much of what we learn and of what some of us teach.

Simply because of its almost præter-human precision—and as the Spanish proverb says, Science is madness if good sense does not remedy it—we are apt to forget that even a minute fragment of this matter-of-fact prose may represent the selfless toil of many minds, each one of them devoted to the task of adding its iota of evidence to the mass of ascertained knowledge. But there are other varieties of this condensed matter-of-fact. Pause for as much of a winter's morning as you can spend over a modern Atlas. At first survey could any human record be less engaging? It may be a masterpiece, but it is a masterpiece in shorthand and hieroglyphics. Brood a while. And presently it comes alive. Untold centuries of human longing, skill, courage, enterprise and endurance lie concealed in it. Every single word and line scattered over its pages is a symbol of the wildest adventure and romance. It is dyed through and through with dreams—and nightmares; encrusted with mortal dust. We may read and mark and learn, we could never completely realize. And like Atlas and Dictionary, it

is an epitome of the labour of centuries.

All true Science, indeed, is a record of vivid human and individual experience in an exceedingly austere disguise. Compared with ordinary records of such experience, it is what a seed-list is to an Alpine meadow in April. It is Romance in a mask like that of the Sphinx in the sands of the desert. Ours must be the clarion of its Spring. Charles Darwin, for example, relates how once, when he was collecting beetles, in the act of seizing a specimen new to him he detected a second as rich and rare, scuttling away into hiding. Having no other receptacle handy, in order to free his hand for beetle *B*, he popped beetle *A* into his mouth—a lyric in action!

It was his magnanimous rival, Wallace, who confessed that such was his rapture in feasting his eyes for the first time on the “dyes” and splendours of a tropical butterfly that he went to bed that night with a violent headache.

For years the famous mathematician, Sir William Hamilton, brooded on the problem: “What is the square root of minus one?” Of a sudden, when he was out walking one day with a friend, the answer, straight out of some astonishing nowhere of that rare mind, flashed into consciousness. So ecstatic was this experience that he thereupon scratched the formula with his pen-knife on the masonry of the bridge which he was crossing at the time. It proved to be a solution of the problem over which he spent another twenty years of his life in bringing it to its full fruition.

Sir Ronald Ross tells how—with despair at hope deferred clutching at his heart, and wearied out with the burden and heat of the tropical day—he peered at length and for the last time yet once again through the lens of his microscope; and lo, at last,

in the stomach of the mosquito beneath his eye, he detected the black pigment granules of the *Plasmodium* crescents. He had tracked down to its haunts that malign enemy of mankind, Malaria. That night he recorded the great moment—and in verse:

This day relenting God
Hath placed within my hand
A wondrous thing; and God
Be praised. At his command

Seeking His secret deeds
With tears and toiling breath,
I find thy cunning seeds,
O million-murdering Death.

I know this little thing
A myriad men will save.
O Death, where is thy sting?
Thy Victory, O Grave? . . .

Now this is emphatically not the prose of pure matter-of-fact. But, however arid and severe the prose that records Science may usually be, it has none the less been based on experiences like these—of the strangest, vividest, intensest and most “romantic” order; and it will need every faculty of the mind to convert it out of its words into personal apprehended knowledge. Ultimate verification of it may be impossible for any one human being.

In view of this, it is clear that only with the most delicate care and insight should we attempt to instruct a child by way of the prose of this matter-of-fact in any such exact knowledge. It is a pemmican that may remain placidly undigested; it may deceive him and us into supposing that his mind is being fed and nourished, while, in reality, it is pining away for lack of a different and apter diet. And when he is asked to demonstrate its nutritive value, its mental vitamins, as it were, if he is a docile little boy, he is liable to return it in the state in which it was

swallowed down—as the whale returned the prophet Jonah. Not that if he learns it parrot-fashion, it need remain useless. Its day may come. It may prove at last of excellent service; but until it is digested it is of service to him only so far as it is serviceable for human beings to talk like parrots—as one is apt to do in a *viva voce* examination.

In form, then, naked if not graceful, in matter supremely comprehensive or precisely restricted, is this prose of Science and the matter-of-fact. It is the prose of a kind of abstraction, the human intellect; and an ideally perfect prose of this kind is conceivable, since precision and clarity are its only indispensable virtues. The knowledge it conveys, is confined, of course, within human conditions. It is man-made; earth-bound. A devil or a divinity with a richer or different range, or acuity, of consciousness might brush it aside with disdain.

To this prose of pure Science, so subtle and heedful a writer as Cardinal Newman refuses the title of literature. "Metaphysics," he says, and it is well to examine his list, "ethics, law, political economy, chemistry, theology, cease to be literature in the same degree as they are capable of scientific treatment. . . . Literature is the personal use or exercise of language." That being so, and I think we should agree that it is so, a prose worthy of the name of literature, must be tinged with that erratic and unique factor, the personal. Moreover, the moment a prose is tinged with the personal, it ceases to record pure matter-of-fact, and may be one of several other things, including matter-of-truth.

We may accept, with reservations, and even credit what is told us, and yet not necessarily assent to it, or, still further, believe that in itself or in relation to other things it is positively

true—for us. And Faith brings us to another category altogether. We may acknowledge too the veracity of the expert who informs us of a certain kind of knowledge, that of latter-day astronomy, for example. As when Sir James Jeans told us that the distance of a certain star, if he should express it in full, with its comet's tail of ciphers, would fill a complete pamphlet. We can credit his statement, yet need not, indeed cannot, acknowledge that it is positive and final truth for us.

When, however, we express any personal truth or conviction, a vigour and animation comes into our prose that is otherwise difficult indeed to achieve. There may even be a curious luminousness in the words that convey what the weaver of them with his whole mind and soul believed to be the truth. He may be half-articulate, even only semi-literate: but somehow, the truth shines through. This matter-of-truth is knowledge acquired and possibly often tested by direct personal experience. When it has been tested enough it is that out of which the scientific species of knowledge is in process of being distilled.

A personal and veracious statement, on the other hand—concerning, say, a ghost or a dream—may be perfectly true and yet remain entirely beyond corroboration. It is to that extent useless or at any rate dubious as scientific matter-of-fact. It may be true, indeed, only so far as the person who utters it is concerned; but otherwise erroneous. As for example when a colour-blind engine-driver avows that the red lamp which bewrayed him into a disaster was green; or when a patient declares that the draught of pure water which his kindly nurse beguiled him into believing was a sedative actually sent him to sleep last night. When, therefore, we say that a

writer is sincere, we do not necessarily mean that what he says is true, only that he believed it, or intended it to be true. So even pure matter-of-fact may ring false in any particular writer's context if we perceive that he himself had not realized its truth. Seven times seven are forty-nine is an accurate but not exactly a truthful statement from a person who cannot count; though it may be a positively animating statement from anyone who delights in arithmetic.

Very unfortunately a great deal of scientific knowledge is expressed in a tepid jargon at second- or third-hand. Its virtue has gone out of it. And unless, as with Atlas and Dictionary, we ourselves can give it life, out it will remain. This may, in part, explain the peculiar flatness that still in varying degree characterizes our lesson books at any age; it may account for the boredom and listlessness at times not only of children but of their elders when sharing what has been universally accepted as matter-of-fact.

Take such an apparently simple little statement of historical science as: William the Conqueror landed in England in 1066. No doubt that is an accurate statement, but to make all it asserts or implies one's own personal truth would be the labour of a Methuselah. And even at that again it would be but truth relative. Still, whatever as a single and sensitive human being you add to, and whatever you omit from, a statement of the matter-of-fact, stamps it yours, gives it a personal impress in some degree, makes literature of it; as Mr. H. G. Wells, for example, has made literature of, say, an explanation of man's digestive processes in his *Outline of Science*.

It is indeed one of the irresistible charms of a scientific prose that the merest trace or accent in it of the personal, of the man of science himself,

is like the shining-out of a candle into a naughty world. Take, for example, these few words from Tyndall's *Fragments of Science*:

Have the diamond, the amethyst, and the countless other crystals formed in the laboratories of Nature and of man no structure? Assuredly they have; but what can the microscope make of it? Nothing. When duly pondered, the complexity of the problem raises the doubt, not of the power of our instrument . . . but whether we ourselves possess the intellectual elements which will ever enable us to grapple with the ultimate structural energies of Nature.

Well, we have surpassed the microscope now, but the sigh of that "nothing" is like that of a faint air wafted across the spaces of night, and only the reader who can catch no glimpse in this fragment of the face of humility could remain blind to its candour. I ought to add, however, that the complete title of the book from which this fragment has been detached is *Fragments of Science for Unscientific People*.

Diamonds and amethysts, it may be said, distract the unscientific intellect and set burning the passions of the heart. That being so, here is a fragment from one of Huxley's essays describing the evolution of a germ—for most of us, perhaps, a less attractive theme.

Strange possibilities, [he says], lie dormant in that semi-fluid globule. Let a moderate supply of warmth reach its watery cradle and the plastic matter undergoes changes so rapid and yet so steady and purposelike in their succession that one can only compare them to those operated by a skilled modeler upon a formless lump of clay. As with an invisible trowel the mass is divided and sub-divided into smaller and smaller portions, until it is reduced to an aggre-

gation of granules not too large to build withal the finest fabrics of the nascent organism. And then it is as if a delicate finger traced out the line to be occupied by the spinal column, and moulded the contour of the body, pinching up the head at one end, the tail at the other, and fashioning flank and limb into due proportions in so artistic a way that after watching the process hour by hour, one is almost involuntarily possessed by the notion that some more subtle aid to vision than an achromatic lens would show the hidden artist with his plan before him, striving with skilful manipulation to perfect his work.

What are the qualities, the characteristics, of this passage as a piece of prose? It is simple, clear, vigorous and orderly—its metaphors serving these qualities rather than merely adorning them. It conceals all effort and is without a trace of obvious artifice. But apart from this, are not its very tones and cadences a harmony in themselves, revealing a profoundly personal interest and delight? As for that “skilled modeler,” that “invisible trowel,” that “delicate finger,” that “hidden artist”—only literary compositions of the rare order admit us to regions so enthralling—and so far beyond a purely scientific corroboration.

Occasionally too, a scientific prose may be the flower of a fancy so exuberant that even a prose-poet intent on the purple patch might gasp in envy. Linnaeus was devoted, if ever man was, to scientific method and precision. To a little evergreen shrub that flourishes in our northern peat-bogs, he gave the name of the fabulous Andromeda. And he explains why, in words that (translated at any rate into English) may to some critics seem not merely fanciful, but sentimental.

This most choice and beautiful virgin, [he says], gracefully erects her long and shining neck, her face with its rosy lips

far excelling the best pigment. She kneels on the ground with her feet bound, surrounded with water, and fixed to a rock, exposed to frightful dragons. . . . She bends her sorrowing face towards the earth, stretches up her innocent arms towards heaven, worthy of a better place and a happier fate, until the welcome Perseus, after conquering the monster, draws her out of the water and renders her a fruitful mother, when she raises her head erect.

Needless to say, that metaphorical “neck” is the stalk; that “rock” the clod whereon the green shrub roots; the “frightful dragons” are frogs and newts; and her Perseus is fiery Summer. We may prefer our bog-plant by the marsh’s brim to be a bog-plant and nothing more, since to be that alone is to remain a lovely mystery. Still to be given a goddess as shrine for the flower is not exactly short commons. And coupled with the fancifulness is an exact observation and descriptive accuracy. Moreover, sheer accuracy of statement may be as much the mark of a fine poetic mind as it is of a fine scientific one.

But the prose of science, of ascertained knowledge, is primarily addressed to the intellect. All else in it, in so far as it is intended to convey pure matter-of-fact, is, scientifically superfluous. There is, however, a matter-of-fact less lofty in aim, that no less clearly exhibits the virtues of a scientific prose: that, for instance, of a cookery book. Take for example this old recipe for dressing eggs, called *Eggs and Moonshine*:

Break your eggs in a dish upon some butter and oyl melted or cold, strow on them a little salt, and set them on a chafing-dish of coals, and make a sauce for them, of an onion cut into round slices, and fried in sweet oyl or butter, then put to them verjuice, grated nutmeg, a little salt, and so serve them.

Could prose be barer in its sim-

plcity? Could the densest of domestic cooks miss her way in it? Could Eggs and Moonshine possibly taste better than that sounds? The scrap in fact is a model of matter-of-fact: and yet in

its homely fashion how charmingly personal, let alone musical, is what we now—so “artily”—call its appeal.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

To be continued.

ABOLISH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS? YES

By JENNIE LEE

THE public school man is an unmistakable product. His accent, his mannerisms, his assumptions, are immediately recognizable in any company anywhere in the world. Even those who, like George Orwell, detested their school days, nevertheless throughout the whole of their lives retain its distinctive stamp. When they turn critic the very intensity and circumstantiality of their criticism has an intimate family air about it, quite different from that of others, who are less personally involved.

But no case can be made against public schools on the ground that those who have been educated in this fashion would have preferred another kind of education. The disgruntled are few; the grateful are many. It would be strange if this were not so, for the best of the public schools are superbly staffed and equipped both for study and for sport.

So why not leave well alone? Why interfere with a part of the educational system that functions so satisfactorily, even though it is an exclusive section barred, for the most part, to families that cannot afford to spend three to four hundred pounds a year on fees and other school expenses?

All this would be eminently reasonable if we were dealing simply with internal school matters. True, some enthusiasts overstate the claims of the public schools. While the best are

excellent, they are far from uniform in quality. A good grammar school is better than a second-rate public school. Also it is highly debatable whether a boarding school atmosphere is better for adolescent boys than the normal flow of family life. I am biased in favour of the latter.

But these considerations are not strictly relevant to my main argument. The public schools would not be the great controversial issue they are if it were merely a matter of the quality of their teaching, the size of classes, the extent to which they continue to specialize in classical studies, the emphasis placed on games. All that could quite properly be left to the judgment of the parent. If one parent, it may be asked, chooses to spend money on school fees, while another, no worse off, or even with a much larger income, prefers some other kind of expenditure, is that not a private matter? Is there any need for Parliament to interfere?

I have put, I hope fairly, the case for leaving things as they are. But the public schools undertake to do a great deal more for their pupils than straightforward classroom teaching; and they take pride in the much more they do. Their boast is that they turn out society's officer class, that they are the training ground for our rulers, that they instil the psychology of command. This is not an idle boast; it is

fully justified by the record. They may not have it all their own way in the world of art, music and literature. Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, Wordsworth, Elgar, Turner, Dickens, Burns, Wells, Shaw, Hardy—the list is almost endless—were not public school men. But in politics, law, the Established Church and the Army their claim is fully justified.

Do we want the kind of society in which some children are trained to command and others to obey? In a modern democratic community should those who lead have a different social and educational background from those who follow? This kind of argument does not arise in dictatorship countries. There segregation of a ruling class *élite* is taken for granted. But what of ourselves? Some people advocate a dangerous compromise. Realizing that the public schools are under fire, they imagine they answer the main criticisms made against them by proposing that up to 50 per cent. of their pupils should be drawn from the working class and lower middle class, the State paying the fees instead of the parents. This is no solution. It cannot even properly be called a compromise. It, in fact, makes bad worse, for it perpetuates the principle of segregation, the training of a leadership *élite* apart from the general run of schoolchildren. Also, by removing from the State-maintained secondary schools some of their brightest pupils, it widens even more than at present the gap between the two school systems. Along that road lies the bureaucrat's paradise.

Schools do not exist in a social vacuum. Inevitably they reflect the prevailing mood of their times. That being so, no-one can foretell with certainty the future of the public schools. All we can do at this stage is to say what we should like to see happen.

Britain in 1954 is significantly different from Britain in the nineteenth century and the first half of the present century, both in its international relationships and in its internal social alignments. We are no longer a rigidly class-bound society with the landed gentry, the professional classes, the trades people and the working classes all expected to know their stations and to keep to them. On the other hand we are far from being a democratic socialist community. The controversy that is going on over the future of our schools is part of the larger social and political conflict that is going on all around us. It is unreal to approach it in any other way.

The future I believe in and work for is one in which all children can grow up with the serene confidence of belonging to one great company. Indeed, my ideal in this respect is the same as that of the great public schools—only with this difference, that I want the kind of relationship the public schools create among children of one class to be extended to include all our children.

The public schools have done invaluable pioneer work for those of us who believe in the comprehensive principle in education. They have taken it for granted that though Jack is not as bright as Jonathan, and Paul is ten times as good a sportsman as Peter, school should make provision for the varying needs of all of them and give to all the same social standards.

What is wrong with that? Here we come to the heart of the matter. Some people wish to perpetuate class distinctions. Others of us wish to end them. That is why Conservatives, with few exceptions, believe in a dual school system, and Socialists, again with few exceptions, are opposed to any such arrangement. This is put very plainly in the Labour Party's

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official policy statement *Challenge to Britain*. After saying that "the existence of a small number of fee-paying 'prep' schools and 'public' schools with small classes and high social prestige, alongside our overcrowded and under-staffed free system of education, makes a mockery of the ideal of equality of opportunity," it goes on to state: "Once we have substantially reduced the size of classes in primary schools and created our new secondary schools, our aim will be to take over the best of the 'public' schools and independent day schools." The new secondary schools referred to are the comprehensive high schools which the Labour Party believes should replace the present fantastic tripartite system in State-maintained secondary education.

The drastic reform of our secondary school system is so urgent that this task takes precedence over, but does not replace, the long-term socialist objective of establishing one social class in our schools, as opposed to two quite distinct classes. At present children in the State secondary schools are subdivided into three categories with first-class, second-class and third-class standards in their living conditions, size of classes, type of equipment, qualifications of staff, and—last but not least—in social esteem. It is nonsense to object to public schools on either psychological grounds or social grounds so long as this state of affairs is tolerated. These divisions, in which the grammar schools are the aristocrats, the secondary moderns the proletarians, and the technical schools somewhere in between, do great harm to children and cause endless anxiety to parents. So long as they continue, parents, in my view, cannot reasonably be expected to give up any advantages they may think, rightly or wrongly, they can gain for their children by



JENNIE LEE.

Photo: Planet Press Ltd.

sending them to fee-paying schools. It is the State's responsibility to see that the standard and range of training available in our secondary schools are good enough to satisfy the demands of all reasonable parents and educationalists. The best of the buildings, staff and equipment of our public schools would be a handsome addition to those we already have in the State-maintained schools. I would like to see these added to the general pool. The time to do it is when existing grammar schools, technical schools and secondary moderns are being converted into comprehensive high schools. I can see no point in taking over the public schools before this is done. I can see still less point in leaving them out of any major reorganization of our school system. And I am fully aware that this would be one of the most fiercely contentious measures

any Government could bring before the House of Commons.

Towards the end of the Second World War there was a progressive spirit abroad that made nonsense of pre-war snobberies and class distinctions. War-time sacrifices and unifying experiences made us think and behave for a time as one nation, not two. We have lost ground since then. I hope that when the next great forward thrust comes my country will have vitality and vision enough to make "equality of opportunity" a reality. That will be impossible so long as the public schools continue to exist. I agree entirely with Havelock Ellis when he wrote: "Democracy alone can conciliate equality at the

outset with an inequality at the end which gives full scope for the best and most apt to work towards the good of the whole. So considered democracy becomes a struggle, not to reduce all to the lowest level, but to raise all to the highest degree of possible culture. Democracy in this sense retains within itself an imprescriptible element of aristocracy, which lies in establishing the superiority of the best with the consent of all; but on this basis it becomes essential that the qualities regarded as superior are really the best, and not merely qualities immobilized in a special class or caste and protected by special privileges."

JENNIE LEE.

ABOLISH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS? NO*

By THE VERY REV'D. C. A. ALINGTON

IT is obviously a considerable disadvantage to have had no personal acquaintance with an institution which you undertake to criticize, and that is a disadvantage which, for all her generous efforts, Miss Jennie Lee cannot wholly overcome. If I may offer a somewhat personal analogy, it would be to say that though I once had the pleasure—and it was a very real one—of entertaining Mr. Aneurin Bevan for a couple of nights, I should be ill-qualified, on that ground alone, to attempt a disquisition on "Bevanism."

I confess that my own educational experience is as truly limited as hers. I have known three or four public schools with some intimacy, but that is all, so that my views may well seem to

to her as one-sided as hers appear to me. On the other hand, one of my proudest possessions is a couple of silver miners' lamps, given to us when we left Durham, so that I am very far from lacking sympathy for the class of man or boy for whom she speaks.

The root-fallacy in her argument seems to lie in her statement that public schools "instil the psychology of command": it would be at least equally true to say that they instil the psychology of obedience to those whom they themselves judge worthy to demand it. A large proportion of a boy's school life—probably about three-

* With Miss Lee's agreement, Dr. Alington was shown her article before stating his side of the case.—EDITOR.

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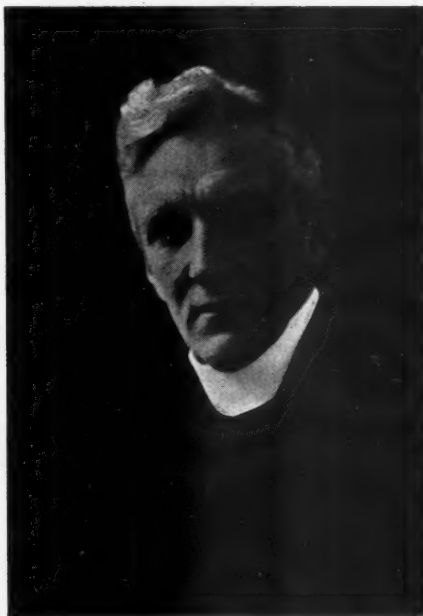
quarters of it—is spent in learning obedience, and so becoming—if he is fit for it—able in his turn to command. Nor are “commanders” chosen for any reason in which rank or wealth play any appreciable part. The public school boy, so far from meditating on his assumed superiority to other people, spends three or four years in learning to do what he is told, and that is the basis of any capacity to command which he may exhibit in his last year or two at school: if he is a snob, as he may sometimes be, it is rather in his home than at his school that he contracts that loathsome disease.

It is interesting to remember that when the Eton Political Society was founded, the two speakers invited to its first meeting were William Temple and George Lansbury—neither of whom was likely to give much support to that feeling of “class superiority” which Miss Lee thinks is so strong a characteristic of the average public school boy.

At their best, and I entirely agree with her that there are bad public schools as well as good, the society they create and foster seems to me to present the purest and most sensible form of democracy that I know. There is no harm in a “psychology of command” which merely consists in the hope that one may ultimately make oneself capable of exercising it with wisdom and justice.

I entirely share her desire that this may be made possible in all our schools, but that can hardly be done by “abolishing” those in which the experiment has been, and is being, successfully tried.

Perhaps I may be allowed to recall an experiment which, when I was Dean of Durham, the Headmaster of Durham School and I carried out for several years. We offered free places in the school to two boys a year as boarders, the only conditions being that their



DR. ALINGTON.

Photo: Elliot & Fry Ltd.

parents should wish it and their teachers approve our choice of boys. The experiment was welcomed by all Durham educational authorities (except the County Council), and the boys did well: we were both sorry when the expense proved too great for the plan to be continued. I cannot imagine why Miss Lee should regard such an experiment as “paving the road to a bureaucratic paradise”: it was, in fact, a humble effort to extend to others a blessing which, through no merit of our own, we had ourselves so richly enjoyed.

I really have no idea what the policy of “abolishing” public schools amounts to. It seems to me simply silly to destroy what Miss Lee calls the “admirable pioneer work” which public schools have done simply because all boys cannot at present profit by it. Public schools were founded, and are maintained, by those who honestly believe in the type of education which

they give. Their foundations in most cases were religious, and it is the fundamental Christian virtues which they seek (however imperfectly) to impart. They have tried and are trying with increasing difficulty to keep pace with modern educational demands; they do not claim any superiority, still less "boast" of it; they fully realize the great educational achievements of schools of a different type, and anyone who knows the Universities would agree that the distinction (which once admittedly existed) between public school and non-public school boys is there rapidly becoming a thing of the past. There can never have been a moment when there was less reason for abolishing them.

When some years ago I was lecturing in Germany about English schools, I found that the great novelty to my hearers lay in those intimate friendships between boy and master which are a commonplace of life in an English public school. Why, in the name of common sense, should it be sought to destroy a successful experiment, the secret of which is known only to us and to the United States of America? Why not rather seek to improve the conditions in which less favoured teachers are labouring and enable them to share

in the benefits of an educational discovery which is really unique?

There are many points on which I fully sympathise with Miss Lee: where we differ—and the difference is fundamental—is that she apparently wishes to level education down, while I hope to see the truly democratic system which our public schools have laboriously and slowly learnt carried on into the schools which the State maintains. I, perhaps naturally, have more belief in schoolmasters than she has: I believe that, if they were only given the chance and the encouragement, they could bring what is best in the public schools into those of different names which they control. But they want more freedom than they always get, and of course they suffer too often from having to teach classes swollen to an extent which makes any real teaching impossible.

There are many grave defects in our educational system of which I am sure that Miss Lee is at least as conscious as I am myself, but she seems to me to be beginning at the wrong end. Decapitation—or the removal, or "abolishing," of the head—seems a needlessly drastic method of improving the general circulation of the body.

C. A. ALINGTON.

FARMERS AND FREE MARKETS

By JAMES RAMSDEN

FARMERS are still expressing anxiety about the long-term prospects of their industry; it is therefore worth while to pursue the discussion as to how far those anxieties are justly

grounded in any failure by the Government to devise a more satisfactory system of guarantees. Are the present methods the right ones, now that prices find their own level, and the

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State makes up deficiencies to an agreed amount? Or were things better before?

Those who would answer "no" to the first of these questions are usually to be found looking back over their shoulders to the days when the Ministry of Food bought farm produce at definite prices fixed well in advance. Now, and for the foreseeable future, the fixed price has been replaced by the one which a free market will pay. It is not always fully realized what a tremendous change in all the conditions which go to make a market lies behind those words. Markets are made by the interaction of supply and demand. The whole aspect of supply has been changed. It is now to all intents and purposes free; more food is available as a result of increased production at home, and the balance can be, and is being, imported. Demand is also free. It was previously regulated by the device of rationing, which has been abolished. In these changed conditions, are the anxieties of farmers simply those of an industry which had become used to having its market made for it, and which now, like other industries, has to find and make its own market? If so, no other section of industry will think them reasonable. Anyone who goes into business must expect to have to worry about markets; and the Agriculture Act anyhow gives a farmer special treatment. Once the market price is struck, that is still not the end of the story for him. He gets a further special payment from the Exchequer to make his return up to an agreed level.

Probably not many farmers would quarrel with this in the free-market conditions which now prevail. But there is an undercurrent of argument which suggests that the Government is somehow to blame for having allowed these conditions to exist at all. This

argument runs somewhat as follows: "We once," says the farmer, "had a policy which enabled us to plan our production, and to sell it in the security of a fixed price. Now the shopper can enjoy his precious free choice, but this favour has been given him at our expense. We have to do the best we can in the market as we find it. Does not this imply a change of attitude and policy, which is now deliberately putting the consumer's interests before our own?"

Such a comparison is quite unreal and misleading. The scales of justice are being quite as evenly held between farmer and shopper as they were before. This is perfectly clear when we reflect that the fixed prices of the immediate post-war years were designed just as much to protect the consumer as they were to encourage the farmer; if anything, rather more so. In those days much of what the farmer had to sell would have made more than the fixed price if the market had been allowed to go free. The evidence for this is the black market in eggs, butter, bacon and feeding-stuffs—now fortunately at an end.

In fact, if we look at the era of fixed prices in terms of the free-market conditions which prevail to-day (and we must do so if any fair comparison is to emerge), it is apparent that farm prices were in most cases being fixed at levels lower, and therefore less advantageous to the farmer, than those now prevailing in a free market. Even in the "good old days" there was a sense in which the farmer was being fined for the benefit of the rest of the population.

In fairness to those who were responsible for fixing these prices, it must be admitted that, as part of the 1947 plan to expand agricultural output, a little extra was added to all farm prices. The idea of this was that a

farmer, after covering his costs and earning his due profit, should have something left to devote to capital expenditure on his buildings and implements. This was one way in which the community was asked to pay something towards the expansion of agriculture following the statutory obligation which it accepted in the 1947 Act. Nothing has waived this obligation in letter or in spirit. The Act is still operating to add a good deal to farm prices, notably through the deficiency payments, in the present conditions of a free market.

Any farmer who feels inclined to ask the Government of the day to relieve him of his market worries by returning to a comprehensive system of fixed prices, should bear the foregoing considerations in mind and realize just what his request implies. It implies that a system already weighted in favour of the farmer by the existing guarantees would have to be weighted yet further against the consumer by deliberately restricting and directing his choice. He would have to be made to take fat pork, cow beef and ewe mutton, at a time when better things are available. There is no precedent for such compulsion. The fact that it once existed is no answer; there was then no available alternative.

In fact, since farmers are as fully aware as anyone else of what is fair and politically possible, such extreme demands are never openly expressed. What is frequently advocated is a more moderate measure of restrictive protection to be achieved through tariffs or import quota restrictions. But neither of these two methods of protecting our home production could be adopted without very serious damage to our overseas trade, and expanding trade is every bit as vital to national welfare as expanding agriculture. If we refused to buy from other countries, they would

refuse to buy from us. Some of them, unfortunately, do so already. We cannot wean them from this attitude by imitating it ourselves. On all these considerations the method of subsidies, applied in the main through deficiency payments, is the only workable alternative open to any Government in giving support to agriculture in present-day conditions.

We can now hazard an answer to our original question. Fixed prices never were a long-term policy, and it is no use harking back to them as though they could be, or ought to be, restored. They could only be expected to last long on the assumption that general shortages were also going to continue; for it was these shortages which called them into being and made them fair not only to the farmer but to the rest of the community.

Something should now be said about the working of the present guarantees in conditions where the price the farmer gets is initially what the free market will pay. Government support to the industry is given in three main forms. The first of these is the structure of minimum prices which were announced recently for two years ahead. The meaning of this guarantee is often misunderstood, because hitherto it has had no practical relevance. The prices in question are "floor prices," and they would not come into effect unless markets became a great deal weaker than has ever yet looked like being the case. They are meant to mitigate the worst effects of a severe slump in farm prices, if such a thing were to occur. In this event they would be paid, but in the meantime they bear no relation to the prices currently being paid, or made up to the farmer, which are determined at each annual review.

Secondly, there is the class of subsidies which have nothing to do with the final price at which produce sells,

FARMERS AND FREE MARKETS

and which for that reason can without difficulty be continued at the present time, when final prices depend on the market. Among them are the grants for ploughing-out and drainage, and the subsidies on beef-calves and on fertilizers and lime. There has always been much to be said in favour of this type of payment, since it is fair between one farmer and another, in a way that fixed prices were not. A price fixed so as to provide a reasonable return for the man on bad land was apt to prove extravagantly remunerative for another on a better farm. The direct subsidies are not open to such criticism and are a more economical means of assistance in view of the widely differing character of farms throughout the country.

Thirdly, there are the price guarantees which are determined year by year at the spring review, and which are made up to farmers by deficiency payments of one sort or another. At past reviews prices have in the main been raised so as to cover and compensate the industry for increased costs during the year. From now on it looks as though the emphasis is going to be shifted. Farmers are being asked to look to improvements in their own efficiency for meeting their increased costs, and not to rely to the same extent as hitherto on increased subsidies to enable them to do so.

The reason is that we already have enough of some classes of produce, notably milk; consequently to encourage the production of more by offering higher prices would be unrealistic. It is frequently objected that this will cause a check to investment in fixed equipment for agriculture, and reverse the present trend towards expansion. But this need not be so. Other industries have successfully encountered the position where a market cannot be expanded any further. They

have had to make the best of the market as they found it, and such a position by no means excludes the need for new investment as a help to efficiency. For example, a farmer may have two reasons for buying a combine harvester, either of which would be valid in different circumstances. He might buy one so as to be able to harvest a larger acreage of corn, if he saw the market for it. Or he might buy one to enable him to harvest his existing acreage of corn more cheaply, and so leave himself with a larger share of the money turned over. The same thing applies to money invested in improving the quality of dairy stock, so as to get better yields for the food consumed. Judging by what farmers are doing, and from articles in the farming Press, the industry has accepted this and is already working along these lines.

Apart from purely financial supports the Government could, I believe, do more to help the industry by way of market advice. Farmers are already alert to the state of their various markets and will be more so as it becomes clear that the best returns will only come the way of those who hit the market right. A case in point was the muddle that occurred over pigs this summer, when the market broke and many pig-producers lost money with expensive repercussions for the Exchequer. The Government is quite right in saying that the capacity of the curing trade is adequate for the number of bacon pigs being produced. So it is if they come forward normally, and not in a rush, encouraged by the fixing of an artificially high price for bacon pigs. It is also right in saying that there are not too many pigs in the country; but only if breeders can be persuaded to plan their production of pork pigs so that they come on the market at the right time of year. Pork will continue to be in demand to bridge the gap be-

tween the total quantity of meat wanted and that which is available from home-killed supplies of beef and mutton, supplemented by imports from abroad. But there is little or no demand for it at the end of the summer, when home-killings are at their peak, and other kinds of meat are in plentiful supply.

Agriculture now has a long-term policy for the first time since the war, in the sense that the methods now used by the Government to intervene in its support have been adapted to fit the long-term conditions, which are those of a free market.

JAMES RAMSDEN.

EISENHOWER VINDICATED

By DENYS SMITH

TWO often misunderstood American policies have been the Administration's methods of dealing with McCarthy and of dealing with Russia. Misconceptions about both have hampered the United States in dealing with its allies. It was widely held that the activities of Senator McCarthy reflected an hysterical anti-Communist mood typical of America as a whole, that Senator McCarthy was backed by Congress and that the Administration had no inclination to oppose him. The related misconception was that the United States was "trigger-happy" and irresponsible, as well as being diplomatically immature, so that at any moment the world might wake up to find that it had been involved in atomic war. Some months ago when an American plane was shot down in the Far East the Defence Department told an angry Press in colloquial language that American pilots had orders "to be quick on the trigger if attacked." Many British headlines gave the impression that American pilots were under orders to be "quick on the trigger," leaving out the all-important qualification "if attacked." This little incident epitomises the chief misconception about American foreign policy. The will

and the capacity to retaliate instantly if attacked is certainly an important feature of it. Americans are convinced that, if that will and that capacity did not exist, then the danger of attack would be increased. The conviction is probably shared by most realists in the free world. In short it is an essential part of any policy dedicated to preserving peace. It is the old "Trust God but keep your powder dry" principle. Being aware of a danger, and prepared to meet it should occasion arise, is not the same as being "jittery."

It is curious to note that the patience and calmness urged upon the United States abroad in dealing with Russia was not similarly advocated in dealing with Senator McCarthy. It seemed most disappointing to some foreign commentators that the President refused to get jittery about him. But calmness in the face of McCarthy's antics and patience in dealing with him paid dividends in the end. During the past year McCarthy was firmly opposed at every vital point; when, for example, he tried to prevent the nomination of Charles Bohlen as Ambassador to Russia, or openly to encroach on Executive rights. The President was quick on the trigger if attacked, but he did not use any

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political atom bombs such as trying to expel McCarthy from the Republican Party. He relied on McCarthy's inner weaknesses to bring about his own downfall, and he has been justified in the event. McCarthy was given plenty of rope and has now hanged himself. Two dangers which had to be avoided were making McCarthy a martyr and enabling him to identify himself with the Legislative branch of the Government in a squabble with the Executive branch. The first would have increased his following in the country, the second his support in the Senate. His own colleagues were the people who could deal most effectively with him. Even mild censure by the Senate would be more effective than violent rebuke from the White House.

It has been a long road from Wheeling, Virginia, where McCarthy first constituted himself the protagonist of the anti-Communist cause, to the Watkins Committee, which recommended that his conduct be censured as unbecoming to a Senator—a long road from McCarthy's rise to his decline and fall. But McCarthy took the road himself and by his own conduct guaranteed himself a minimum of followers. The censure debate led to an emphatic three to one vote condemning McCarthy for his defiance and abuse of an elections sub-committee three years ago and for his abuse of the Watkins Committee during the censure debate itself. The Watkins Committee had also recommended that he be condemned for his abuse of General Zwicker who, acting on orders, had declined to tell McCarthy who was responsible for the promotion of Major Peress, an Army dentist suspected of being a Communist. This count was dropped when it became clear that a large number of Democrats would not support it. McCarthy had lost his temper

because the Executive branch refused to provide information sought by an organ of the Senate. Condemning him might have indicated approval of the Administration's attitude. The Democrats who opposed the Zwicker count held, in effect, that they could not condemn McCarthy's loss of temper under the circumstances, though they did not approve of the way in which it was exhibited. They might want to do some investigating of their own when they control the Senate next year, so did not want even indirectly to put themselves in the position of endorsing the Administration's right to withhold information. This showed that the Administration's fear of McCarthy becoming identified with the Senate as a whole in a dispute with the Executive was a real one.

Twenty-two Republicans finally voted for censure and twenty-two against. Since two absent Republicans had announced they would vote against censure, the McCarthy forces appeared to be in a majority so far as the Senate Republicans were concerned. Actually the hard core who fully supported McCarthy were only about nine or ten. The remainder thought that a formal censure motion was too severe and wanted the Senate instead to disavow and express disapproval of McCarthy's actions. The wise political course for McCarthy to have followed after this vote would have been to try to make it appear that he had the full backing of this group of twenty-two or twenty-four Republican Senators. Instead he issued a violent attack on the President which won the approval of none of them, except Senator Welker of Idaho. McCarthy may have been acting in blind anger or he may have been hoping that he could goad the President into an equally angry answer and thus have started a long-range

verbal duel which would have increased his prestige. But the President had shown in the past that he is not a man who "goads" easily. He ignored McCarthy's attack. Its net result was, as the Republican Party Chairman, Leonard Hall, said, that Republican unity was increased. Instead of causing a split in the party, McCarthy had turned himself into a not very dangerous splinter. Part of the Administration strategy in dealing with McCarthy was to force him to make the break with the Republican Party himself. The other was to build up a solid record of dealing effectively with Communists and subversives in the Government and show that there was a way of dealing with the problem without resorting to McCarthy's methods. The basis of McCarthy's attack on the President was that he was not fully aware of the Communist danger. Owing to the President's policy, however, this charge appeared completely hollow.

A President who has not been goaded by McCarthy into an unwise course of action is not likely to be goaded into an unwise course by Russia or the Chinese Communists. But equally a President who rejected any idea of appeasing McCarthy to make "co-existence" with him possible is not likely to accept an unsatisfactory form of co-existence with Russia. Eisenhower's domestic experience with McCarthy suggests that a policy of firmness combined with patience is profitable. Soviet power, like water, flows wherever there are no barriers to check it. American policy, therefore, is to create barriers where they do not already exist. It took the United States some years to appreciate this. During and immediately after the war the impression prevailed that the war-time alliance with Russia would be carried forward into the post-war era, that the comradeship of arms

would make an enduring fellowship possible. The word co-existence, with its present connotation of friendly association, was not current then, but it could have been applied to American policy. Relying on this hopeful prospect America rapidly demobilized. The chief post-war danger was thought to be European economic collapse, not Soviet expansion. The Marshall plan was adopted before the North Atlantic Treaty.

Churchill was almost alone in the closing days of the war in taking a more realistic view. The British armies thrust up as fast and as far along the Baltic Coast as they could and prevented a Russian occupation of Denmark. Churchill has now disclosed that he was prepared, if necessary, to arm Germans to check the Soviet flow—a disclosure which was taken as further proof of his remarkable foresight in the United States, where the furore about it in England seemed surprising. One of the arguments used against Churchill at the time was that he might cause resentment in Moscow by showing such lack of confidence in an ally. But Moscow showed no more resentment than it showed gratitude to the United States for restricting the American advance in the Allied centre. To-day it is recognized in the United States that such emotions as gratitude or confidence, and by the same token resentment, do not influence Russian policy, any more than they influence the flow of a river. Russian expansion is not something which will stop, but something which has to be stopped. The President expressed much the same idea in an extemporaneous speech on November 16, when he said: "The greatest mistake America makes is to assume there is morality in international relations." Long-term peace was impossible without morality, so for

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the time being the United States had to adopt the short-range pragmatic approach.

Eisenhower amplified his views at a later Press conference when asked if chances of peace looked brighter. The chances of war seemed less, the President replied, but real peace was not the absence of war; it meant the possibility of turning the nation's resources and efforts now devoted to defence to the benefit of people in general. The chances of war had grown progressively less since the time he left Columbia University to take command in Europe. In other words progressively stronger barriers had been erected to Soviet expansion and the possibility of a *modus vivendi* with Russia had become thinkable. At another conference Eisenhower declared that one could call this co-existence if one liked, but whether it could be called "peaceful" co-existence depended upon the definition of "peaceful." If there had been any change in Russian tactics there had been no change in Russian objectives, the President added. The official

American view is that Russia's conciliatory attitude is due to the fact that a balance of military strength has now been achieved, coupled with the knowledge that there can be no victor in an atomic war, only victims. A good way of describing the present situation would be "competitive co-existence." The Soviets will continue to try and subvert the non-Communist world and the United States will continue to try to prevent it. If small areas of co-operation arise full advantage will be taken of them; but the hope of "co-operative co-existence," the real peace of which the President spoke, when the need for military defences does not drain away so large a part of the nations resources, still seems far away. "One ever present danger is the danger of being fooled into dropping our guard before the peril is passed", Dulles said in his recent Chicago speech. It was because the free world was now strong enough to make armed attack unprofitable "that there is less danger of world war than seemed to be the case a few years ago."

DENYS SMITH.

THE "CHARMS" OF RENO AND LAS VEGAS

By M. R. K. BURGE

THROUGHOUT the world Reno spells divorce. Go there, and you find that gambling crowds the scene.

I do not think that I am prejudiced, though when my wife and I were in Reno a month or two ago we were not

taken to see the University or even the residential quarter. We put up at the staid of the two big luxury hotels (each with its lavish, noisy cabaret); and in it, as well as in the casinos and "clubs" and eating places in which the business quarter abounds, every

corner was filled with gambling apparatus. More than half the breakfast room was so occupied; and since it is the Nevada rule that gambling (like drinking) goes on day and night, we found croupiers on the job at breakfast-time just as they had been when we went to bed; croupiers, and the "come-on" girls, and men whose job is to keep the tables alive; and even a few customers. And we had to sit at the already busy bar, while we waited for a breakfast-table to fall vacant.

Roulette, played at what you might call half-tables; vingt-et-un, with tables for six; crap, involving what rather resembles a baize-lined bathtub on legs—these are the three principal games, and their apparatus is in such quantity, so closely arranged, in the halls that there is none too much room to walk around. There is also bingo (= 'ousie-'ousie) played in special parlours looking like school-rooms; and a cognate but more complicated, oriental game which we never got to understand.

And there are the fruit-machines. You never get away from their clatter. They are ranged side by side along the walls or tucked into odd corners or set in serried ranks in rooms devoted wholly to them. You can find one to swallow whatever coin you fancy, from a nickel to a silver dollar. (Of all the Mountain States none surely finds that big coin so handy as Nevada.) The guide books estimate that there are 1,000 fruit machines in Reno. There seemed to be far, far more.

They gamble sadly in Reno. Neither customers nor croupiers smile often. Grimmost of all is the commonest sight, of a man or woman with a pile of coins standing or sitting at a machine or pair of machines, endlessly feeding in coins, pulling down the handle—endless, whether or not the jackpot

unexpectedly breaks and rewards the monotony.

At first we supposed that Reno's other big industry, divorce, caused the sadness, but we got no evidence of this. Doubtless gambling helps many to pass the six weeks that divorce customers must reside in the State, but such people are not distinguishable in the crowds. I may be prejudiced about the divorce business too. We did visit one dude ranch (call it a guest house with livery stable) where young-wives-in-course-of-divorce are accommodated—often by their almost-ex-husbands' arrangement, for they are here protected against the adventurers who are always on the wait to exploit emotional crises. We found this ranch sadder than the casinos.

A likelier explanation is that Reno loves respectability—Reno, and also the man who is the power behind the gambling: the proprietor of Harold's Club, the main gambling organization. It is not a club at all; its big halls and bars and eating-spaces (all cluttered with fruit machines) are open to all, at all times. Nor is Harold its proprietor's name. He is, they say, a New England puritan who disapproves of gambling and will not have his name mixed up in it. (Harold, they say, is his son's Christian name.) He gives lavishly, they say, to the churches and all good causes. He advertises Harold's Club all over the United States—that I know.

Reno is Nevada's biggest city. Close to the State Line, equipped with a good air-field, it is handy for the dashing Californians. It takes its divorce business as seriously as its gambling. But even so it seems a little ashamed of both. Its businessmen would like to play them down, and boost Reno as a winter resort, and make the most of its superb air.

Or is it that Reno is uncomfortably



REPRODUCTION OF A POSTCARD ADVERTISING THE "GOLDEN NUGGET" CASINO AT LAS VEGAS.

aware of a competitor—Las Vegas?

This ebullient city itself consists of two rival sections. There is the old down-town section in which are the brassiest spots—the Golden Nugget, the Pioneer Club and the like: the Blackpool of gambling. Miles before you get to Las Vegas, as you drive up from Los Angeles—right out in the Mojave Desert—you meet gaudy roadside advertisements of the down-town spots. Why? Because you enter Las Vegas along "The Strip", which is a startling succession of new and very fancy establishments—hotels and motels and restaurants—that take a lot of passing, with their fancy names and showy facades and swimming-pools virtually on the highway, and their exploitation of their Hollywood connections. Here are such caravanserais as the Desert Inn, the Sahara, the Lost Frontier, the Flamingo (once owned, they tell you, by Bugs Siegel, whom other gangsters shot because he

was muscling into their territory). Other fancy Las Vegas names are Thunder Bird, Show Boat, Par-a-dice. A towering new hotel that is in course of building threatens to strike a new, less exotic note.

On The Strip you gamble in surroundings of luxury, where there is an air of gaiety, almost of abandon. On The Strip Betty Hutton sang her swan-song, and grandmother Dietrich displays such fine form for so handsome a fee. Free entertainment, Hollywood glamour, good food and liquor at cheap prices—The Strip offers all these, just to get you to do a little gambling. (Behind the gambling is said to be the notorious Costello—presently in prison, but what of that?)

Las Vegas even dares vulgarly to suggest that the purpose of easy divorce is easy marriage. Prominently advertised are such spots (magisterial, not church enterprises) as "The Wee Kirk o' the Heather" and "The

Hitching Post—where the Stars wed.”

Reno plays down divorce and gambling. In its publicity-literature Las Vegas does not play them up.

It puts down its chief industry as Tourist Business. It tells that its population grew from 2,304 in 1920 to 23,624 in 1950 to 49,812 in 1954; that its average family income is higher than in New York; that it possesses 38 hotels and 245 motels, together providing 7,251 “rental units”; that 3,759,865 visitors are housed each year, whilst over two millions come just for the day (and spend \$5 each); that tourists spend nearly \$67 millions “otherwise than on gambling and drink.” It is estimated that they put \$50 millions into the casinos; of liquor it is stated that the consumption is 208 per cent. above the national level, and that it is estimated to bring in \$7½ millions.

As for the State of Nevada—it describes itself as a “haven for the tax-weary.” There is, I understand, a heavy tax on gambling apparatus, but in general Nevada does not hold with taxation. It has no income tax, inheritance tax, death transfer tax, sales tax, gift tax, or tax on intangibles. Its property tax is small. The tourist pays. No wonder Nevada’s population increases so fast, or that the divorce condition of six weeks’ residence is strictly enforced.

The ethics of Nevada are the concern of Nevada, and to a lesser extent of the United States. If the foreigner is tempted to feel that they are a weed in a beautiful garden, he may at least reflect that on all hands Nevada gambling is taken to be “straight”; whereas the gambling carried on pretty openly—in Jackson Hole and Galveston, for instance—is generally agreed to be crooked.

Right or wrong, straight or crooked, Nevada’s gambling comes as a shock. We met it first in Carson City, the State’s little capital. We had sadly left the white elegance of San Francisco, the cultured taste of the Napa Valley. We passed Lake Tahoe, some 4,000 ft. up in the mountains, deep blue encircled by deep green. We overlooked the hints given by a big advertisement of a Justice of the Peace, by a notice that a certain hostelry bestrode the State Line. We stopped in Carson City for a noon-tide drink. Our host led the way straight from the street into a crowded, noisy, smallish room. A roulette-wheel was spinning. Fruit machines clattered. Dice rattled in a noisy crap game. At the bar an elderly man in shirt-sleeves shouted thickly: “Fill up all glasses with champagne.” We were so surprised that we walked straight out again into the sun-baked street.

If it was a shock to meet, it was a relief to leave it by the route we took. Not far beyond Las Vegas is one of the Wonders of our World—the Hoover (or Boulder) Dam. The road—itself a marvel of engineering—winds through fantastic, brick-red, tangled mountain crags. Pylons cling to the rock at crazy angles. The dam itself is a slender roadway across a precipitous valley. To our left was huge, man-made Lake Meade, silent and bright blue. To our right, infinitely far below the roadway, deep green water moved in sinister eddies, in a narrow gorge. There is no thunder of rushing water as at Grand Coulee Dam, no millrace as at Bonneville; but here is vast silent power, set in superb beauty—a scene in which the fruit machines were soon forgotten.

M. R. K. BURGE.

WALTON BREAKS SILENCE

By MARTIN COOPER

SIR WILLIAM WALTON'S *Troilus and Cressida*, which had its first performance at Covent Garden on December 3, is not only the composer's first essay in opera, but also his first major work for fifteen years. Since the violin concerto of 1939 he has written only a concert overture, *Scapino* (1941), a string quartet (1947), a violin sonata (1950) and occasional music, mostly for the cinema. At fifty-two he stands very high in reputation both here and in America, and his long silence before attempting something entirely new has naturally increased the public's curiosity.

Musical opinion is not divided on the question of Walton's natural gifts, his extraordinary skill—partly instinctive but also cultivated and sharpened by much experience—or his universal resourcefulness. There has, however, been a divided feeling about the character of his music and especially about his ability to sustain and renew the inspiration of his early works. Even twenty years ago, when his symphony was first heard, there were those who thought they perceived a coarsening of mental fibre and a something like the first appearance of a "middle-aged spread" compared with the viola concerto and *Belshazzar's Feast*. Certainly the violin concerto, which was commissioned by Heifetz, represents a return—a brilliant and in many ways attractive return—of the formerly independent-minded artist to traditional paths. At the time of the 1937 Coronation he had shown, perhaps no less to his

own astonishment than to that of his friends, that he could carry on the tradition of Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* so convincingly that the accusation of mere pastiche would be difficult to sustain. In the quartet and violin sonata he showed his skill and invention within the limits of an entirely orthodox language, but neither of these works added to his reputation as an original creative mind.

The gradual transition from youthful revolution to middle-aged orthodoxy is as normal in the artist as in the rest of us, and perhaps no more to be deplored. Exceptions are few in either case; but among artists it is the exceptions who finally count in the history of their art. The power of renewal prolonged into advanced old age by such composers as Verdi and Vaughan Williams is altogether exceptional though Beethoven, dying at fifty-seven, had just begun to explore entirely new, uncharted musical territory. Richard Strauss, on the other hand, spent the last thirty years of his life exercising his incomparable gifts in variations of his own earlier works; and it may be that it was an instinctive desire to avoid this that led Rossini virtually to abandon composition at the age of thirty-seven. In some artists, though never in the greatest, the creative faculty is intimately connected with the physical exuberance of youth. When middle age, or even complete maturity, comes, they are left with technical powers undiminished or even increased, but the life, the freshness—what we loosely call the "inspiration"—has gone out of their



SIR WILLIAM WALTON.

Photo: Douglas Glass.

work. They may still be, like Strauss, infinitely resourceful inventors, but they no longer create anything really new. Among composers Mendelssohn is perhaps the extremest and certainly the saddest instance of this foreshortened creative life.

Walton first attracted the attention of the musical world in 1923 by his *Façade*, a glittering and irreverent entertainment in which Edith Sitwell was his partner. This outdid in high spirits and even more in musical quality all the similar experiments which were being carried out at the same time in France. The music shows an instinctive taste and skill phenomenal in a composer of only twenty-one, a spirited wit and a strong vein of poetic feeling. The works of the next six years—*Portsmouth Point*, *Sinfonia Concertante* and the viola concerto—are marked by the same freshness and high spirits, but also by a very noticeable broadening and deepening of Walton's musical character. A vein of melancholy, already observable in the *Sinfonia Concertante*, is prominent in the viola concerto, though it alternates with the

same sparkling bravura that characterized *Façade*. In his next work, *Belshazzar's Feast*, he turned the traditional English choral work to entirely new and devastatingly effective account. The power and sweep of his choral writing, the intensity of dramatic expression, the restless vigour of rhythm and the wide range of brilliant orchestral colouring made *Belshazzar's Feast* a landmark in twentieth-century English music; and those qualities remain largely undimmed after nearly a quarter of a century. Up to this time no one had questioned Walton's great and growing stature as a composer. With the symphony, which followed three years later, we have seen that the first questions were raised. The obvious indebtedness to Sibelius, particularly in the first movement, suggested that in his search for a genuinely symphonic style Walton was looking back to the late nineteenth century. Some critics found the last movement a contrivance rather than a logical conclusion to the work—it was known to have given the composer much difficulty—and suggested that the blaze of orchestral glory with which it ends dazzled indeed, but could not convince them of its rightness. Nevertheless the symphony was unquestionably a major achievement, an enormously exciting musical experience and the work of a vitally creative artist. Perhaps it is only in the light of the works that have followed that criticism of it has gained greater weight.

Walton was now thirty-two and should normally have been at the height of his creative powers. His success had brought him apparently all that a composer of his age could want—wide recognition, brilliant and influential friends and freedom from financial anxiety. Yet from now on he seemed to find composition increas-



SCENE FROM TROILUS AND CRESSIDA, ACT II.

Photo: Wilfred Newton.

ingly difficult and the majority of his work since has been done very slowly and only to commission. This is in itself a disquieting sign, for fertility has been a recognizable hallmark of the great creative artist. It is a common injustice to composers to complain that their latest work is either disappointingly unlike or else all too like an earlier favourite. The music of all composers with strong musical individualities shows "finger-prints" by which it can easily be recognized. The danger point comes when these finger-prints become mannerisms, when the composer's range narrows to a comparatively small repertory of basic ideas and his fertility is shown in variation of these rather than in new creation. In the violin concerto Walton's first concern was to write an effective piece of music for the great violinist who commissioned it. He

plainly had the example of Elgar's concerto in mind—another example of turning backward rather than looking inward or forward—and he produced a fine, very largely conventional concerto which admirably fulfilled its purpose. He was not tempted to repeat himself, for the character of the work made new demands; and the typical finger-prints, though less bold, are still not mannerisms.

Troilus and Cressida was commissioned by the B.B.C., the first opera commissioned by the Corporation. Walton has worked for four years on the score and its generally enthusiastic reception must have been a great gratification to him. Unlike many operatic composers, both now and in the past, he was fortunate enough to obtain an excellent libretto, from Christopher Hassall. And not fortunate only, for composers generally get the

librettos they deserve and Walton's own literary and dramatic sense certainly contributed to the shaping of the poem in its final form. The plan is simple, large and dignified enough to deserve the name of tragedy, even if the characters of the protagonists and their circumstances lack the full tragic nobility and the element of true moral conflict. Cressida is a frightened, undecided woman who seeks in love security and protection. She finds it in Troilus; but she is parted from him immediately by circumstances over which she has no control and, after a comparatively short separation, yields under pressure to the urgent claims of a new and more powerful lover. She is, in fact, the victim of circumstance and her own weakness, nearer in character to the "little women" of Puccini's operas—Mimi or Butterfly—than to the great tragic heroines. Troilus' love for her is genuine but he accepts their separation with hardly more than an indignant protest, as though he too were a helpless plaything in the hands of the Greek and Trojan politicians. The character of Pandarus, Cressida's uncle who brings the lovers together, is brilliantly amusing, a piece of good-humoured social satire executed with easy grace and forming an admirable foil to the lovers.

Walton's music is thoroughly enjoyable. His characters are musically as well as dramatically defined and, except for a passage of rather too prolonged inactivity at the beginning of Act 3, the work moves smoothly forward from climax to climax. There is much in the music that is familiar from *Belshazzar's Feast*, from the symphony and the violin concerto—

particularly rhythmic figures and characteristic harmonies which are novel in their theatrical context, rather than in their essential nature. When this novelty has worn off, it may seem that these are indeed mannerisms, though they are used with such skill and to such purpose that the ordinary listener is very content to accept them. For the lyrical monologues Walton has created a language to which Puccini, Richard Strauss and even the Tchaikovsky of *Eugene Onegin* have all contributed, and very effective it is. Those who hoped that the composer might make a wholly new departure in this work have been disappointed. He has written instead a wholly traditional opera, easily accessible and a complete contrast in every way to Britten's highly individual, experimental operas. There is more in Walton's opera to please the ear and touch the heart than to stimulate the imagination or the intellect; and there is unquestionably room for such a work in the small repertory of English opera. In *Troilus and Cressida* Walton may be said to sustain rather than to increase his reputation; and it seems most improbable that his art will now develop any further. There is no question of him succumbing to the fate of Mendelssohn, but the parallel with Richard Strauss is not impossible. At Walton's age Strauss was finishing *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and the remaining eight of his operas added nothing to his reputation. If, on the other hand, Walton at the age of seventy-six produces anything as delightful as Strauss's *Capriccio*, we shall have no grounds for complaint.

MARTIN COOPER.

BRITISH SOCCER TO-DAY

By SIR STANLEY ROUS

HAVING read and listened to much of what is being said about the present state of English soccer, it strikes me that we badly need to evolve something akin to a system of mathematics if we are to assess intelligently the real state of the game. Assessment of quality—and criticism of any kind—implies some kind of yardstick, and when the assessment is misleading it is frequently the yardstick which is at fault. When people write or talk about the “decline,” the “collapse,” or even the “disaster” which has fallen upon English soccer, it seems to me that they have got hold of the wrong kind of yardstick, not to mention the wrong end of it.

What is the correct yardstick for a game like soccer? It might be said that it should be results over a period of years. On this showing, judging by the fact that the best that England can produce is occasionally beaten by teams from other countries—even small ones like Hungary—the standard of our soccer has declined pretty seriously. Another common yardstick, and one much favoured by the more elderly, are the great teams and players of the past. Where, people ask ruefully, are the G. O. Smiths, Dixie Deans, and Ernie Blenkinsopps of to-day? If only we had teams like Blackburn Rovers of the 1880's or Huddersfield Town of the 1920's, things would now be different.

I submit that both schools of criticism are wrong, that both their yardsticks—and they are very commonly used—are inadequate and misleading. Let me deal with the “old-timers” first. Any comparison with the teams of the past seems to me to be hopelessly unrealistic and apt inevitably to be dis-

torted by nostalgia and sentimentality. Pitting West Bromwich Albion of last season against say, the old Corinthians, may be good wholesome amusement, but it can teach us nothing. Those who knowingly compare results are, I think, equally mistaken. They forget the simple fact—and it is surprising how many do forget it—that results cannot be separated from the strength and character of the opposition. There was a time when England could expect to beat all comers from overseas, but that day is now of course ended; her first home defeat last year at the hands of the Hungarians marked the end of an epoch which had been showing all the signs of dying for quite a time before. England taught the world how to play soccer and “the pupils are now as good as the teacher.” Comparisons, therefore, between the results against pre-war and post-war overseas teams are difficult if not impossible, to make. They do not necessarily indicate a decline, as deficiencies which were probably always present are only now becoming apparent.

I know that by setting out arguments of this kind, I am laying myself wide open to the accusation that I am belittling England's failure to retain her supremacy, and to the serious charge of complacency. Does this mean, I can hear readers ask, that the Secretary of the F.A. is satisfied with the showing this season of England's international team? The answer is that in football one can never afford to feel satisfied, that in many ways the present team, although it contains some first-class players, is still a long way from blending into the kind of team that can be confident of meeting all comers. Even when

judged in relation to the international form shown by England teams in recent memory, I would go farther and maintain that the present side is not of the same calibre as the one which defeated Italy 4-0 at Turin in 1948. But to be objective I should at once add that even the best teams fluctuate. Football history is rich with examples of a first-class club, which has been brilliant for one, two, three or even more seasons, but then runs into a bad spell. The same things happen to international teams; England's team to-day has not yet succeeded in finding its potential form or the right combination. These fluctuations in form—and this is the most important part of my argument—take place within the high limits set by the immensely improved standards of overseas competition.

The detailed methods by which a team sets about regaining its form could be written about at length, but would be beyond the scope of this article, and I would prefer to devote the rest of my space to larger and more fundamental problems. That is not to say that methods of training, the need for a higher standard of fitness, longer pre-match get-togethers and allied questions are not also of the first importance; they are constantly receiving attention, and we are not slow to learn, particularly from our competitors. For instance, the practice of the Spartak teams, which recently played Arsenal and the Wolves, of training in the days before the match at the very hour the game was due to be played is well worthy of thought and probably emulation. Tactics, too, are kept under continual review, but whether one advocates the "three-pronged" system of attack, the "bolt" defence, "waltzing" or patterned types of movements as against the more direct methods, it is folly to separate whatever tactical style is adopted from the character and

capabilities of the actual team members. To what extent a team's stem from the player's individual styles and abilities, and to what extent the players follow a definite technical scheme worked out in advance or hallowed by tradition, is always a nice question. What is certain is that any club manager will agree, that, while tactics are very important, they are meaningless without the players capable of putting them into operation. He makes a plan to fit his team, not a team to fit his plan.

There is an old saying in the Durham coalfield: "You've only got to whistle down a Durham pit-shaft and up will come a complete football team." By and large the same is true of the whole country. England possesses an enormous reservoir of native talent; our small boys seem to take to football almost as soon as they can toddle. But behind such a saying lurks a fallacy—that natural ability and skill are the only things that matter. Apart from the genius, who will get to the top anyhow, this is far from being the case. Most good players only become first-class provided they are given every chance, provided their inborn talent is nurtured in the right kind of way. This means more playing-fields and more coaching.

If we consider playing-fields first—and by that I mean facilities generally—there is no doubt that many of our competitors are now in several respects ahead of us. Most other countries are perhaps lucky in the sense that they possess far more open space, but my impression on visits abroad since the war is that they are increasing their facilities at a far more rapid rate than we are. It would be easy to draw up an impressive list of new stadia that have been built in the Argentine, Chile, Peru, and elsewhere in South America, in addition to the gigantic erection in Rio opened for the World Cup. In Europe there has been a spate of building;

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there are excellent new buildings in Rome and Lisbon ; in Hungary they have opened many new grounds in addition to the new stadium in Budapest ; Germany has at least five new stadia. In many countries quite a new form of club has been developed, altogether different from either the large professional or the amateur clubs we have here. One South American club records no less than 40,000 members and football takes its place beside tennis, swimming, dancing and other amusements ; the premises are finely equipped and membership is open to all supporters. Germany has seen the opening of several new magnificent *Sportschule*—financed incidentally with the profits from running football pools. Switzerland has the beautiful National Recreation Centre at Macolin—but why go on ? The point I am trying to establish is that in many countries sport is being assisted on a really lavish scale. I know the National Playing Fields Association has done and is still doing splendid work and deserves every support, but I also know there are far too many keen schoolboys and young men who get far too few chances of playing soccer on a decent piece of grass. The responsibility is greater than the F.A.'s. If we are to regain our position in international football, more playing fields and facilities are urgently needed.

When it comes to coaching, we can report considerable progress. The F.A.'s national coaching scheme developed after the war now entails an annual expenditure of well over £10,000 a year and there is a growing list of qualified coaches operating at schools and youth clubs all over the country. Much has also been done in the way of promoting coaching, publications of all types, coaching films and film loops. Football in the State schools continues to be organized on an elaborate scale, thanks to the ungrudging spare-time services of

numerous schoolteachers, and its progress can be gauged by the success of the annual schoolboy internationals—at Wembley and other centres. The F.A. has recently promoted a "soccer drive" in the public and grammar schools, and courses for boys from these types of schools are now arranged annually. Until lately it was often the case that the good player who left school at, say, fifteen stopped playing because there was no organization to cater for his special needs. A wasteful gap occurred between the normal school-leaving age and the time when he became an adult player. Much attention has been paid to this difficulty, and by means of two national youth championships (on a county and a club basis), a home international championship, and the very successful international youth championship—played last year in Germany—the shortcoming has to some extent been reduced.

I have mentioned a few of the innovations the F.A. has made during the past few years to show that for some time we have been aware of the need for improvement, and that we have the future standards of play very much at heart. The international players of to-morrow are to be found among the outstanding schoolboy and youth players of to-day ; that is the essence of the problem. Our young sportsmen need every encouragement and, in some ways, far more practical support than perhaps, as a nation, we have given them in the past. It is not only a question of being able to beat Hungary or Italy in the 1960's. It goes deeper than that, for I believe that sport has an effect on the moral as well on the physical bearing of each generation. In education, in the widest sense, I am sure that sport is quite as necessary as mathematics.

'STANLEY ROUS.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

FROM "Episodes of the Month,"
The National Review, January,
1905:—

To the Englishman . . . who cannot subsist on Party shibboleths alone, and who is consequently unable to adopt the Party perspective, the outlook at the present time, both at home and abroad, is distinctly disquieting, and is greatly aggravated by the very Parliamentary conventions which are held up to our perpetual admiration. They are ostriches whose only ambition is to bury their heads in the sand, and who absolutely refuse to look round the horizon, for fear they may see some storm before it actually breaks. At the present moment a great and pregnant struggle is in progress, and one which will probably absorb the attention of posterity, as marking an epoch in human history. It is moreover of peculiar interest to the British nation on account of the close and intimate tie which unites us to one of the combatants . . . And yet one may peruse the arid oratory of the so-called "autumn campaign" in vain for any indication that British statesmen of either Party appreciate the character of the Russo-Japanese War . . .

Perhaps the most important national event of the past month is the official announcement of the redistribution of the British Fleet, which has been anxiously awaited for some time, for, as is candidly admitted in Lord Selborne's admirable explanatory memorandum, the present arrangements are some generations out of date. Though economy does not necessarily include efficiency, efficiency always makes for economy, and it is not surprising to learn that the new reforms are expected to effect some saving; at the same time we devoutly hope that the Admiralty will refuse to be squeezed by the Treasury at a moment when every other Power is expanding its navy, simply because Mr. Balfour, with a pedantry

unworthy of his intellect, deems his Government pledged not to broaden the present basis of revenue. The new reforms seem to be essentially sound. The obsolete ships are, as has long been urged by the "agitators" of the Navy League, to be eliminated from the list of effectives, which will result in the release of valuable *personnel* which has hitherto been locked up in useless vessels. Then, again, the redistribution of our battle fleets shows that at last the Admiralty and Foreign Offices are upon speaking terms. In a word, the re-arrangement, which we imagine to be largely responsible for the overpowering civilities of the Germans during the last few weeks, officially recognizes what has long been patent to the man in the street, viz., that we are far less likely to find ourselves at war with France than with Germany. Hence a reduction of the Mediterranean squadron, and a great concentration of sea power in the Channel, which may possibly lead General von der Goltz and his school of strategists to reconsider their favourite doctrine that the concentrated German squadrons enjoy an immense advantage over the scattered British fleet. A powerful Atlantic fleet, based on Gibraltar, is the pivot of the whole plot. It is connected on the one hand with the Mediterranean fleet and on the other with the Channel fleet, while reserve and cruiser squadrons are provided for. This momentous change marks a substantial advance of authority from the not distant days when the British Navy was distributed on the assumption that Germany could in any case be counted on as a friendly neutral. Lord Selborne is to be warmly congratulated on his programme, and it is not too much to hope that an avowedly progressive Admiralty will realize the necessity of creating a naval base on the North Sea, as there is no repairing dock above Chatham. Rosyth is apparently derelict.

BOOKS NEW AND OLD

THE WORLD WITHIN THE SKULL*

By ERIC GILLETT

THEORIES of evolution mystify me as much as they appal me.

Geological time scales dealing out prehistoric and human existence in terms of millions of years set my head spinning. When I am told that Mrs. Jacquetta Hawkes's *Man on Earth* challenges the orthodox theory of evolution with her view of the whole of human history as a development of consciousness and its apprehensions of the external world, my first impulse is to plead that I shall not have to read it. Fortunately Mrs. Hawkes has a style, so clear and compelling, that it would be difficult not to read what she writes, and although one has not the knowledge to judge whether she is right or wrong when she expounds how man began to have a mind of his own, her account of the sudden first manifestation of artistic power at the end of the Old Stone Age, and her study of the structure of the brain are so graphically done that they spur the reader on like chapters from a first-rate traveller's tale. Mrs. Hawkes's writing is quick and concrete:

The human brain is about eight inches long, six inches across, four inches deep, and three pounds in weight. It contains some ten thousand million nerve cells, about four times as many as there are at present men on earth. It rests on a rough, bony floor and is vaulted over with four or five smooth, gracefully curved bone plates held together by sutures far more intricately cut than the finest jigsaw puzzle. I have said four or five, not because I am too lazy to look up the

correct number, but because the plate forming the forehead is in two parts in infancy, but normally fuses into one bone in later life. Occasionally, however, an adult may retain a suture right down the middle of his forehead.

Her story includes many of the moments in history which have done most to shape the mind—she is particularly happy in writing about the Greeks—and her study of the developing intellect is full of fortunate touches, as when she notes that although it would be false to say that the writings of Proust are greater works of art than those of Homer, we need not deny them a subtler, more fully realized knowledge of human beings, their nature and condition. In fact, consciousness is constantly being enriched and heightened, “even as men and women die, and peoples rise and fall.”

When Mrs. Hawkes published *A Land*, someone suggested that it was a prophetic book. She has called the

* *Man on Earth*. By Jacquetta Hawkes. Cresset. 21s.

Walter Scott: His Life and Personality. By Hesketh Pearson. Methuen. 21s.

O Rare Amanda! The Life of Amanda McKittrick Ros. By Jack Loudan. Chatto & Windus. 15s.

English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, excluding Drama. By C. S. Lewis. Cumberlege, O.U.P. 30s.

The Fall of France (Assignment to Catastrophe, Vol. II). By Major-General Sir Edward Spears, Bart. Heinemann. 25s.

Father of Nobody's Children. A Portrait of Dr. Barnardo. By Norman Wymer. Hutchinson. 15s.

Quite Early One Morning. By Dylan Thomas. Dent. 10s. 6d.

The Lanchester Tradition. By G. F. Bradby. Richards Press. 7s. 6d.

last chapter of *Man on Earth* "A Myth for the Future." It is her belief that it is our supreme duty to use our individual lives to extend and enrich experience by all the means made available to us since we became men. Suggesting that we are at this moment full of guilt, despair and cruelty, she throws out the comforting thought that there have been scores of times when the world must have appeared as disastrous to thinking men as it does today. "The security and hopefulness of the Western world at the time of Queen Victoria's death was quite exceptional and made the four walls of our humanity appear unrealistically solid." Mrs. Hawkes's answers to the question "What has gone wrong during the last four hundred years?" have given her the opportunity for some of the best and most moving writing in this fascinating book. She asks us to remember that the State is an evil myth, projected by man when he loses faith "in an established god." The earth is a speck in an inconceivably vast universe. In the unending search for the truth which must be the main purpose of each human generation we must find the "necessary laziness, energy, and discipline." I do not think that I have ever encountered the word "laziness" used so intelligently before.

Sir Walter Scott would have understood exactly what Mrs. Hawkes meant. Mr. Hesketh Pearson, an immensely competent, conscientious biographer, has just written *Walter Scott: His Life and Personality*, drawing upon Scott's full correspondence and the accurate transcript of his Journal, which were not available when Una Pope-Hennessy and John Buchan wrote their biographies in 1932.

Mr. Pearson is a sensible biographer with an eye for essentials and a sound sense of perspective. This is the seventeenth "Life" that he has written, and

although none of his books has any pretensions to deep scholarship and he never aspires to profound psychological knowledge of his subjects, he has a knack of painting a satisfactory portrait and bringing out relevant detail which could be copied with advantage by more ambitious performers. Here, Sir Walter's great zest for life, his failure, largely owing to extravagance and disposition to trust his colleagues, his preoccupation with tradition and history, are all brought out in a most engaging manner. Scott was incapable of harbouring a grudge. "Life," as he once remarked, "is too short for the indulgence of animosity." Nowhere does this appear more strikingly than in his magnificent "Journal," which is, as Mr. Pearson says, perhaps the most valuable, certainly the most moving, of all his productions.

The "Journal" reveals Scott as the great and good man that he was. The collapse of the tragi-comic Ballantynes, Scott's responsibility for their appalling blunders, his comments on his reception when the world knew that he was a ruined man, are among the best material in his intermittent diary. His determination to pay his creditors was beyond praise, and so was his industry as he worked on, sick and failing, after his strong creative impulse had left him. Overshadowed by the enormous success of his poems and novels his *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, published in 1827, was the first book of this kind to sell like popular fiction. Macaulay, Carlyle, Lytton Strachey and others owe more to Scott than is generally realized. He believed that it is better to write a superficial book, which brings out the facts as brightly as possible, than a dull boring narrative, "pausing to see further into a millstone at every moment than the nature of the millstone admits." It took him two years to complete.

THE WORLD WITHIN THE SKULL

During this time he was occupied also with stories, reviews, journeys and law work. The collapse of his fortunes shocked him. His wife died. The "Life" came out in nine volumes, and the first two editions earned eighteen thousand pounds for Scott's creditors. His industry continued until the day, not long before he died, when after being wheeled in his garden he asked to be placed at his desk. A pen was put in his hand but he could not grasp it and he fell back weeping. It seems likely that Mr. Hesketh Pearson's capable biography will send numbers of readers to the *Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, which appeared in its complete form in one volume only four years ago. The sooner it is made available in a cheap reprint, the better. No nobler or more honest record of the thoughts and feelings of a very great man was ever written.

In 1923 Mr. Aldous Huxley wrote a lively essay, *Euphues Redivivus* on a novelist even more rich and strange than her fellow countryman, Henry Brooke, author of the astonishing *Fool of Quality*. Amanda McKittrick Ros had been esteemed by a small circle for some years before Mr. Huxley issued his tribute to her. Edward Grey, Asquith, E. V. Lucas, Robert Lynd, Arthur Ponsonby, and Desmond MacCarthy were only a few of the admirers of her extraordinary novels, *Irene Ildesleigh* and *Delina Delaney*, and her even more bizarre verses, *Poems of Puncture*.

Mrs. Ros was an odd mixture, grandiose, shrewd and romantic by turns. She could spout abuse like a fishwife, had two great hates, lawyers and literary critics, and a style which was all her own. Mr. Jack Loudan, who knew her, has just written her biography, with the apt title, *O Rare Amanda!* I have called her rich and strange. Two short extracts from her

writings should justify these epithets:

From a letter:

By birth I am an Irishwoman though a dash of German blood piebalds my veins: my father traced descent from Sitric of Almlanc, King of the Danes, but such antiquitous tracery almost obliterates relationship and I assure you I do not wish to pass as a limb of kingly caste.

From an unpublished novel:

I am Helen Huddleson from beyond Ballynahinch in the County of Down and a native of Ireland's North, and have been hunted like a hare all day by that man, Lord Raspberry, who wants to steal me from my lover, Maurice Munro. "O! Porter, I wish all three men to be seized," wringing her ungloved hands in abject despair.

There is no more than a hint of *The Young Visitors* about this, but there is another influence which pervades her fiction. Amanda's favourite novelist was Marie Corelli and she considered her to be the greatest writer of all time. Miss Corelli spent a good deal of time denouncing the critics. Mrs. Ros, who felt that she was second only to Corelli, excelled her in blistering her detractors. "I pity such poor apes," she wrote. "I am the Notorious Boil on the tip of the Critics' tongues." The subject of so much derision herself she was extravagant in her behaviour towards anyone she believed to have wronged her. She was litigious in the extreme. A gentleman living in Larne, where her husband was stationmaster, remembers her driving through the town in a pony and trap, holding aloft a banner with a notice printed on it denouncing Mickey Monkeyface McBlear, her name for a solicitor who had acted for her opponents in a law case. In business she could be a terror, and receiving as a bequest a limekiln she became involved in prolonged troubles which ended in her resounding defeat. Private

life shows her to have been generous and attractive, but entirely without humour as far as her own affairs were concerned. She married twice and her first husband was almost deified by her in his lifetime.

Her life was in some ways as extravagant as her writings—and some of their titles. I am a proud possessor of *Poems of Puncture*, but I am still looking for *Fumes of Formation*. It is pleasant to know that Amanda had a few moments of triumph. The most satisfying was when she heard that *Irene Iddesleigh* had been published by the Nonesuch Press. As she rightly stated, it was now “sistering Shakespeare, Milton and Blake.”

It would be interesting to have Professor C. S. Lewis's comments on Mrs. Ros. In the latest volume of the Oxford History of English Literature, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, excluding Drama*, Mr. Lewis advances his own ideas about the literary development of an interesting and difficult period. As he says, though “periods” are a mischievous conception they are a methodological necessity. The book is divided into Late Mediæval, the Drab Age, and the “Golden” Age. The Late Mediæval extends roughly to the end of Edward VI's reign. The Drab Age lasts until the 1570's, and the epithet implies that the poetry of the time has little richness of sound or images. In calling the succeeding period “Golden,” the author intends to convey that the poetry written then is not simply good but also innocent or ingenuous:

Men have at last learned to write; for a few years nothing more is needed than to play out again and again the strong, simple music of the uncontrived line and to load one's poem with all that is naturally delightful—with flowers and swans, with ladies' hair, hands, lips, breasts, and eyes, with silver and gold,

woods and waters, the stars, the moon and the sun.

One may agree with Mr. Lewis's classification without necessarily accepting altogether his definitions. The thing that matters most about this book is the liveliness, the living, kindling interest which animate almost every line of it. As an undergraduate I suffered keenly from the (mostly) deadly dull textbooks on this period. There is nothing of the kind here. It is agreeable to be told that Lyly's *Euphues* was a “temporary aberration” on the author's part, that his claim to fame rests on his light touch and exquisite delicacy in writing artificial comedy. “In our own age he would have been a leading light of the O.U.D.S. and when he went down would have become a producer.”

The book is liberally sprinkled with revealing touches of this sort. Mr. Lewis is forthright in his judgments. Spenser's *Epithalamium* is our only evidence that Spenser might have been among the greatest lyrical poets. Thomas Nashe is the perfect literary showman. Deloney, treated cavalierly and briefly, is credited with a peculiar talent for reproducing the chatter of silly women. Indeed he had, but I have always felt that he had more to do with shaping the novel than Mr. Lewis allows here, and I think Mr. Lewis could have been more generous to his stories.

One of the most interesting passages is the consideration of the literary merit of Shakespeare's sonnets. It is the best and sanest verdict I have read.

The book is described as “the completion of the Clark Lectures for 1944”, and this accounts for the colloquial style. It is unusual to be buttonholed by a historian and it could be tedious, but when the writer is a happy zealot, with marked enthusiasms and dislikes, the process is a pleasant one. This is a

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good, strong, opinionated book, and all the better for it.

Volume II of Sir Edward Spears' "Assignment to Catastrophe," entitled *The Fall of France, June 1940*, is even more morbidly fascinating than its predecessor, *Prelude to Dunkirk*. Among the pathetically indecisive and intriguing ministers and generals, Georges Mandel emerges as a great man. The brilliant character sketches of Pétain and M. Reynaud, whose moods varied almost hourly, make sad reading now. This is an appalling story, only redeemed by the courage of Mandel and of General de Gaulle, and the resolution shown by Sir Winston Churchill:

The courage of the man was, in fact, breath-taking. What enhanced the impression was that he was so completely unconscious of it himself. He was so sure, so certain, so single-minded in his decisions, so unconcerned with anything but the effect any given measure would have on the result of the war that the weight of his staggering responsibilities sat lightly on his shoulders.

The two volumes of *Assignment to Catastrophe* are among the very best of the behind-the-scenes literature about the last or any other war. Sir Edward Spears is a most vivid and scrupulous recorder. Everything that can decently be written about a deeply tragic episode is here, and blended with it is enough of the author's own experiences to give the keen edge of reality which can only be experienced and communicated by a participant.

The author brought General de Gaulle to England in a small plane. It put down in Jersey for petrol. The General asked for a cup of coffee. He was given a cup of tepid tea. As Sir Edward comments, "His martyrdom had begun."

It is fifty years since Dr. Barnardo

died. Mr. Norman Wymer marks the occasion with his *Father of Nobody's Children*, an admirable short "Life" of a resolute, tireless social reformer and innovator. Barnardo was a brave man and a character. Dressed in top hat and frock coat he searched the filthy alleyways looking for destitute children and gave them the chance of good lives. We may sometimes regret that there are children to-day who do not get the opportunities they deserve, but when the general scene is considered and the contrast between present conditions and the frightful abuses of children in the nineteenth century, it will be seen how much the case has altered for the good. This is an unpretentious biography, but its subject makes it important and valuable.

Quite Early One Morning contains the striking broadcasts made by Dylan Thomas. They range from the lovely *Memories of Christmas*, the *Reminiscences of Childhood* and *Holiday Memory*. Thomas was most at home with a Welsh subject, but whatever he had to broadcast, he put his whole heart into it. There is a theory among some of the experts on broadcasting that the subject of a talk is what matters. As long as the delivery is reasonably good, it will pass, and perhaps be the more effective for its "naturalness." I know that Thomas was opposed as strongly as I am to this belief, and it is interesting to find that Mr. Aneurin Davies, who worked with Thomas over some of his talks, has a word to say here about the amount of consideration and industry that went into them.

Thomas did not often speak on the air, but he made a great reputation on the strength of a small number of talks. Anyone who worked with him will remember the way he had of repeating phrases aloud at rehearsal until he was satisfied that they expressed exactly what he wanted to say. Then he would

practise over and over again intonations and vocal modulations until the thing was in the shape he desired.

I have never been in a B.B.C. studio with a speaker more vital and sincere than Thomas was. He was also a considerable literary craftsman, and the reprinted broadcasts in *Quite Early One Morning* are worth reading for their excellence as radio essays, for that is exactly what the best talks are. Those who heard him will turn to the book with anticipation. Others will not be disappointed. Dylan Thomas did not enjoy writing but he managed to make his readers believe that he did. Hard work, concentration, and the search for the right word and the ability to deliver it are the things that matter in broadcasting. Thomas was a master of all these things.

One of the best of all school stories, *The Lanchester Tradition*, by G. F. Bradby, has come out again, after being out of print for far too long. Only Rugbeians can tell how much the author, who was on the staff there from 1888 to 1920 after being a pupil, with only a few years at Oxford intervening, drew upon his personal experience in giving the best account of a school senior common room ever written. The egregious Tiphams, the enthusiastic Chowdler, the reserved Bent, and the new-fangled headmaster, Flaggon, seem hardly to have aged at all since I met them first in 1914.

ERIC GILLET.

LEWIS OBSERVED

WYNDHAM LEWIS. By Hugh Kenner. *Methuen*. 12s. 6d.

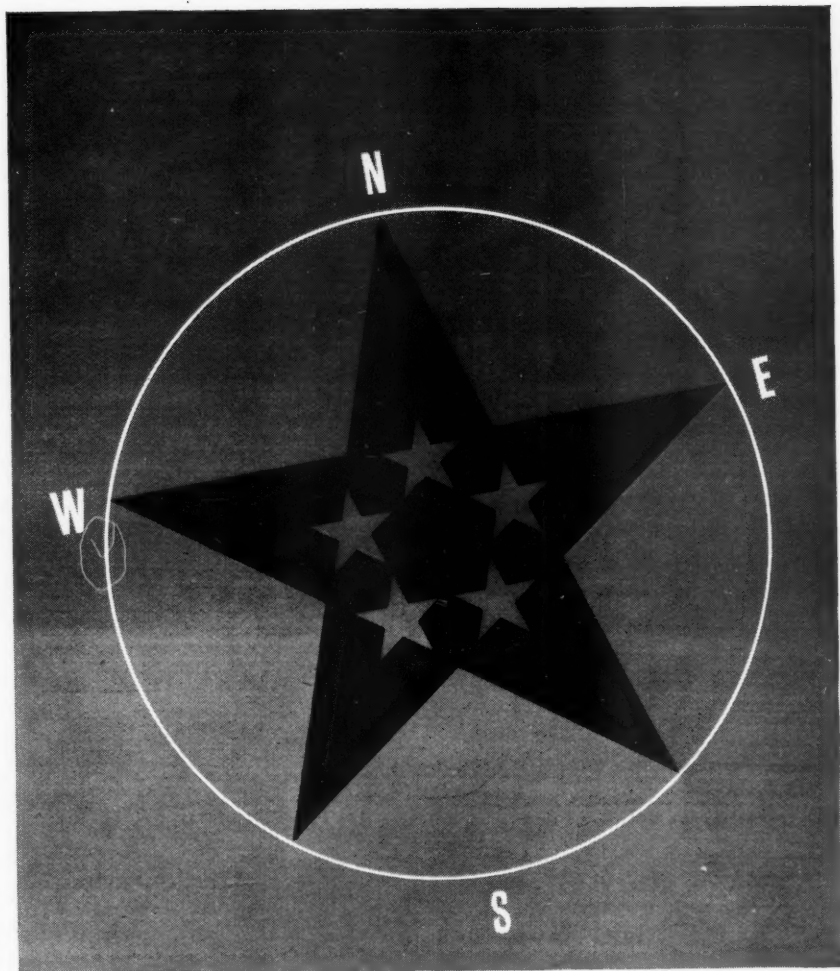
THE DEMON OF PROGRESS IN THE ARTS. By Wyndham Lewis. *Methuen*. 12s. 6d.

PROFESSOR HUGH KENNER has written a very good book about Wyndham Lewis. Its prime virtue is to show lucidly the course and nature of Mr. Lewis's career: a feat more remark-

able than it sounds, for previously his work has been dealt with in generalizations. Professor Kenner is general on occasion, but for the most part admirably specific. Beginning with the opposition of Arghol and Hanp in the early play *The Enemy of the Stars*, he shows that Mr. Lewis has been almost continually concerned with genius and its ape. Ape Hanp resents Genius Arghol; Hanp is a crowd, or society, or a counterfeit kind of "Nature," Arghol is the pure personality or ideal genius. At the same time Hanp is Arghol's creation and his necessary, inseparable companion. This highly metaphysical conception the Professor makes altogether convincing: and once it has been accepted much that seems difficult or obscure in the later works is explained.

Behind the wonderfully concrete style are some highly abstract conceptions. The Bailiff in *The Childermass*, for instance, is a kind of super-Hanp, who has become also in the course of years a mouthpiece for the doctrines of time philosophy exposed in *Time and Western Man*. A whole complex of ideas is set moving like clockwork through the puppet figures of *The Childermass* and *The Apes of God*: at times a little too much like clockwork, Professor Kenner suggests. But he does not ignore the fact that the full force and flow of Lewis's genius emerges in the Bailiff's speeches, so that this incarnation of a disliked idea has a wonderful reality.

Professor Kenner is so percipient about Mr. Lewis's work that he often makes points in a phrase which the rest of us have fumbled at clumsily in a page or two. Such is his illumination of Tarr, when he says that Mr. Lewis considered this Arghol-image as "a new kind of human being, a saint without the supernatural"; or of the difference between the showman Ker-Orr and the characters he displays—"the only difference is that they *are* machines, whereas he *operates* one." But Ker-Orr and Mr. Lewis's other protagonists are machines too, of course, even the absent Pierpoint in *The Apes of God*, and the attempt to detach these figures from their machinery appears as a not very successful sleight of hand.



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It is about such difficult conceptions that Professor Kenner has written a lucid book. He sees *Tarr* and *The Revenge for Love* standing out a long way from the other fictions, and it is to be hoped that what he says about the latter novel will send some readers to that neglected masterpiece. Perhaps this is the only novel in which all Mr. Lewis's extraordinary gifts are fused: the rare capacity to write a novel in terms of ideas is here joined to the more commonplace (but for this writer more difficult) task of creating credible characters and providing them with a logical plot. The god above the stage is not apparent, the characters are granted an illusion of freewill, the action in which they are involved blends with the ideas behind it.

Professor Kenner seems to me less than just to *The Apes of God*, a little too kind to *The Vulgar Streak*: but the fact that one is moved to such minor criticisms shows the essential justice in this view of "the man to whose mind the Cartesian split and the Nietzschean energy were not hobbies but life-blood, who having made the centre of his world a vacuum, was better equipped than anyone else to write out of inner knowledge the tragedy of his time."

A new pamphlet by Mr. Lewis reminds us that his career continues. *The Demon of Progress in the Arts* is a plea against the fashionable abstract art of the moment, encouraged by non-artist pundits. Critics are warned off any attempt to dispute the thesis advanced by the author's frequent affirmation that its truth can be apprehended only by practising artists. It is to be hoped that they will not observe Mr. Lewis's injunction strictly by failing to review the book. Ignoring his warning (as surely as he means it to be ignored) one is bound to say that this powerful piece of argument is over-simplified. On page 31, for instance, Mr. Lewis says that for a beginning artist to-day "there is no painting worthy of consideration between extremist" (abstract) "painting and the Royal Academy." But he has already said a little earlier that "the English school making its appearance during

World War Two, and just after, is actually the finest group of painters and sculptors which England has ever known." Are not these artists—Moore, Sutherland, Bacon, Ayrton and others—there as exemplars? Are not their examples generally followed? And can this sudden flowering of English painting and sculpture be equated with the general decadence envisaged in the pamphlet?

There are other over-simplified passages (for instance in the section dealing with André Malraux' view of art and with the reasons for experimental painting): but the pamphlet is marked also by Mr. Lewis's extraordinary ability to illuminate one facet of life by another, and to cut through irrelevancies to an unremarked truth, as here he notes in relation to the artist and his public: "In our own time, the visual artist and the writer, these two classes of citizen alone, provide a (more or less) cultivated public formidable in size. And without the members of this cultivated class no art could exist."

JULIAN SYMONS.

ON THE FRINGE

WELSH AND SCOTTISH NATIONALISM. By Sir Reginald Coupland. Collins. 25s.

IT is unfortunate that the late Sir Reginald Coupland did not live to see this work through the press, as in that event it would undoubtedly have been a better book. Professor Jack Simmons of University College, Leicester, who writes the Foreword, says that it "must be read in its context: as the first volume in a projected series of 'Studies of Nationalism in the British Commonwealth,' and as the last completed work of one of the most distinguished of British imperial historians." Few would deny Coupland's distinction, but his latest work is hardly a fair specimen of Coupland at his best. It has all his compendiousness, his suavity and lucidity, but it is full of misprints and mistakes and curiously devoid of inspiration. A great deal of more or less familiar, but scattered, material has been usefully assembled in one volume in such a way as to present the

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problem of the nation-state relationship; yet nobody could say that the problem has been seriously attacked by Coupland, much less solved. He repeats the old English shibboleth, maddening to the Celt, that cultural nationalism is an admirable and indeed a necessary thing, *provided* that it is devoid of economic or political implications; and he ends by attacking even the most mild variety of federalism. Then he adds, without comment, five shatteringly strong arguments in the other sense, which effectively demolish his own case, and ends up by saying: "The issue is plain. On its decision the future of Welsh and Scottish nationalism depends." What issue, and what future?

The fact is, Coupland cannot have it both ways: nationalism cannot be both good and bad. No self-respecting nationalist is going to limit himself to a purely cultural expression of his feelings, whether it be in "Lallans," Welsh or Erse. He is not going to be content for very long with the "administrative devolution" being offered to him by the Royal Commission on Scotland, or even by the more ambitious "Parliament for Wales." The rake's progress of the nationalist is invariably from devolution to Dominion status, and from Dominion status to political independence. Has Eire, or has Israel, ever looked like being content with "cultural" nationalism? Then why should Wales or Scotland?

It is no good arguing that the personal success of favourite sons at Westminster or in the City will always compensate the Welsh and Scots, when it has failed to satisfy the Irish and the Jews. In other words, you cannot escape from that spreading cultural uniformity which Coupland so much deplores without risking the destruction of that political, economic and strategic unity which he is so anxious to preserve. Heaven knows, a completely anglicized Great Britain is a sobering thought, even for Englishmen, but can Welsh and Scottish nationalists seriously imagine that there is any future for them in the Balkanizing of the British Isles? Do they really think that they could avoid being engulfed by either Russia or America?

It is to be feared they do, but fortunately most of their compatriots do not.

These are the people—the great mass of ordinary, common-sensical but patriotic Welsh and Scots—who must try to put a bridle on their own extremists and retain what is viable in nationalism. The English cannot do it for them: it would merely exacerbate the situation if they tried and, in any case, so far as small nations are concerned, the English seem no longer to believe in force. The tolerability of life—let alone the possibility of the good life—in these islands depends upon the wisdom, the restraint and energy of moderate nationalists, qualities which it is extremely difficult to combine. For they are between two fires: that of their own hotheads on the one side and the smouldering, slowly advancing, inexorable and ineluctable heath fire of unconscious anglicization on the other. Oddly enough, the English do not know that they are anglicizers; they positively prefer the kilt and harp as the concomitant of summer holidays; they are all for culture and the Celts. It is the great masses of the ordinary Scots and Welsh who are less interested in their own nationalisms than in remaining, let us say, good Socialists.

Consider, for example, the recent miners' conference at Porthcawl and its rejection of the "Parliament for Wales," or the fact that when Plaid Cymry more than doubled its vote at the last Aberdare by-election it still fell short of the 1945 figure and was not far from forfeiting its deposit. The fact is that nationalists may have an "auld alliance" with the Liberals and the more gullible among them may occasionally be taken in by Communists; with Socialists and Conservatives they cut no ice at all. For it is at once our political life-line and our cultural damnation that in this country the only kind of nationalism which can command majorities by tens of thousands is that of Cardiff Arms Park, Murrayfield and Twickenham. Let the common sense of football crowds decide the issue. You might have a worse arbiter.

ANTHONY STEEL.

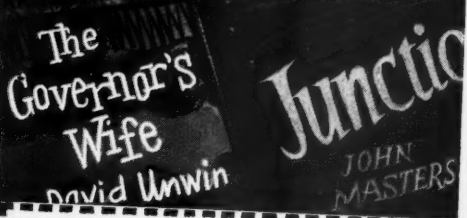
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ALASKAN WARLORD

THE LAW OF LARION. By Peter Freuchen.
Evans. 12s. 6d.

LARION was a famous Red Indian chief whose territory lay on the banks of the Yukon, near where it flows into the Pacific at no great distance from the north-east coast of Russia. He appears to have been an attractive character, brutal and barbaric, yet with a high standard of integrity, zealous always for his personal reputation and that of his clan, living and ruling by a simple yet rigorous code: "*Endure or die, that your honour may live.*" This presumably is the Law of Larion, a rather unhappy title for his life by an eminent Danish Arctic explorer.

As fiction-biography it is extremely well done, holding the reader's interest from the first page to the last. It is therefore perhaps churlish to question how little was recounted to the author by the grandson of one of Larion's principal lieutenants, and how much is the imaginative writing of one who is unquestionably well-informed about Alaska and its early turbulent history. No doubt the raw bones of the story are true enough.

And what a story! At the time it opens, in the 1830s, Larion by his personality and courage had already made himself pre-eminent among the Indian chieftains. Then a Russian trading post was established on the Yukon. In exchange for furs the tribes now obtained axes, knives, steel spear-points, iron cooking-pots, needles and fishing-hooks to replace their primitive stone implements. The benefits of civilization, which included vaccination against the decimating scourge of smallpox (but also, unfortunately, a too liberal dispensation of vodka) transformed life in Alaska. Indians and Eskimos alike stopped fighting and settled down to trapping in order to earn household riches hitherto undreamed of. For years Larion honourably kept his pact of friendship with the Russians, though his pride as a great chief was hurt by their persistent refusal to give him a firearm.

The arrival of two Canadian traders enabled him to exchange scores of valuable

furs for a weapon so ancient and unsafe that its accidental discharge killed his only son. He slew them both in vengeance, but lost his wife in the skirmish. The British in due course sent a naval officer, Lieutenant Bernard, to investigate their deaths. He thought he knew well enough how to handle natives and sent Larion a series of insulting messages. Honour demanded punishment and Larion massacred both him and the chief Russian official; the author has found their well-kept graves, by the side of each other and dated February 16, 1851. Unfortunately, Larion drove a spear through his daughter in the process. Embittered by the loss of the whole of his family in the course of his various passionate deeds he retired for ever to the hinterland. There appears to have been no retribution, probably because England and Russia were by that time at war in the Crimea.

MARTIN LINDSAY.

LIFE FOR A LEGEND

PORTRAIT OF BARRIE. By Cynthia Asquith.
James Barrie. 15s.

CYNTHIA ASQUITH was J. M. Barrie's secretary for twenty years. She was no ordinary secretary, as Barrie was no ordinary author. She did not know shorthand. She could not type. Her engagement was contrary to all the accepted rules. But the justification of that engagement emerges as clearly from her book as the portrait of her curious employer. She was intelligent. She was sensitive. She was, in the highest degree, percipient. She never hints nor implies as much, but she obviously became indispensable. The reader will find it not in the least surprising that Barrie should have remembered her generously in his will, and that he should have expressed the wish that when his life was written Cynthia Asquith should write it.

The book is in no accepted sense of the word a biography. It omits much. It skims over more. The disastrous marriage—upon which so much must surely have hinged—is barely mentioned. Its writing appears patently as a labour of

love: the work of one proud to have been both an avowed admirer, and an intimate friend. But it is no oleograph. The shadows are presented as faithfully as the light, the cruelty with the kindness, the moodiness with the inspiration. It stands as an admirable tribute to one whom it is, at the moment, fashionable to denigrate, and even to despise. It explains, in a curiously moving way, how this denigration is to some extent justified. There is immense perception in the author's conclusion that Barrie was not in fact and in himself a Peter Pan, an individual in a permanently arrested state of adolescent development. He was, on the contrary, a projection of the mother-instinct which dislikes and opposes the growing-up of their tiny sons. The ghost of "Margaret Ogilvie" stood permanently behind his shoulder as he wrote.

The drawing of the background is as vivid as it is fascinating: the discomfort of "the low, book-lined, tobacco-laden room, perched high above the Embankment" with its "great cave" of a fireplace, its high-backed wooden settle, "quite the most excruciating seat ever devised," its short leather couch; and its wonderful view "down the river to St. Paul's . . . up the river to the Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament." There are illuminating sketches of Barrie's great contemporaries: of Chesterton and Wells; of Sir Walter Raleigh; of Thomas Hardy—in two minds as to which of his two wives he would prefer to lie nearer to in the grave; of Freyberg, V.C.—who, with Robert Falcon Scott, was Barrie's ideal Man of Action, representing all that he wished to be and knew that he never could be. There is perhaps less sureness of touch in the references to cricket and the Allahakbarries. But without them the portrait would have been incomplete.

Indeed, it is only where "portrait" is exchanged for "record" that the book tends to some extent to lose grip. And, for one reader at any rate, it became something of melancholy regret that so much space should have been given to the tragedy of the *Boy David* production. True that the Fates were unkind, and that

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there remains a morbid fascination about the whole chapter of wretched accidents. But true also that *The Boy David* is a poor play, impossible in its demands alike upon actors and stage-management. Barrie, in this connection, allowed himself to fall into a trap which has ruined many other less distinguished and adroit writers. He forgot the fundamental limitations of the theatre medium, and he challenged comparison with Holy Writ. There can have been few people who saw the play at His Majesty's, and shared the author's admiration for Elizabeth Bergner's accomplishment, who did not inevitably think of the splendid simplicity of David's lament over Saul and Jonathan in the original Biblical version, and wish that well might have been left alone. Over *The Boy David*, Cynthia Asquith has allowed sympathy, most comprehensively, to blanket criticism.

But it would be unreasonable and unfair to emphasize any shortcomings in a book which does so much to bring to life a figure that has been for too long an idol, a dummy, or a legend. VAL GIELGUD.

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Novels

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Vierte. *W. H. Allen.* 15s.
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PRIVATE'S PROGRESS. Alan Hackney.
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HELL IS A CITY. Maurice Procter.
Hutchinson. 9s. 6d.

WE are all indebted to Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode for undertaking the issue of a complete edition of the works of François Mauriac, flawlessly translated by Gerard Hopkins and produced in an elegant format worthy of a great novelist. The edition now includes *Flesh and Blood*. Though written thirty and more years ago this distinguished novel shows almost no signs of immaturity, and has more freshness of attack than, not unnaturally, the author's latest works. Here is his singular ability to create complete characters in a book of narrow compass, his insistence upon the power of one human being to shape or mis-shape another. This theme is here developed in terms of half a dozen characters of whom the most important are Claude, the young seminarist who, conscious that he has not the true vocation, returns to the Giroude to work for a gross *nouveau riche*; the employer's daughter and son—Mary whom Claude loves but who rejects him, and Edward who is Claude's opposite in his lack of all faith and who, aware though he is that his love for the worthless Edith has no reality, yet takes his life when her worthlessness is inescapably established. Through these conflicts and distresses François Mauriac somehow contrives to steer story and reader to a final sense of tranquillity. A powerful and impressive novel.

Peter Vierte has written with immense gusto a long book of which I enjoyed every page. It tells how a great film-

maker (but "impossible" person) goes to Africa ostensibly to make a film, but in fact to fall a victim to an obsession to kill big game, particularly elephants. That may sound a slight story and even an uneventful one. In fact *White Hunter, Black Heart* is full of incident all of it relevant to the essential point—the development of John Wilson's character. If anything the book is too short; for its flaws are that from the start the reader has to accept it that Wilson is a great film-maker, and at the end he learns in a few curt paragraphs what are the fate of film and director. Though the story begins in London it soon shifts to Africa—to Uganda and the Congo—and the local colour is as convincing as the highly diversified character-studies.

As a warm admirer of Marguerite Steen's last two novels I may perhaps be allowed to regret that she has now reverted to the Spain of ranch and bull-ring of which she has written in the past. Let me say at once that *Bulls of Parral* is as satisfying a novel as it is a long one. The focal point of its big canvas is the rivalry of two matadors and its effect upon the daughter of the house of Parral whose husband is one of them. The surroundings and background are painted in vivid detail. Across the whole lies the shadow—as it proves, of course, the tragic shadow—of the bull-ring. The picture is no doubt true to life. The author patently is steeped in her subject—so much so that the book almost reads like an exceptionally able translation from the Spanish. (A glossary is indeed supplied of the technical Spanish terms used in the text.) This sense of something alien just spoils what in other respects, notably the power of its sultry descriptions, is a *tour de force*.

Its publishers suggest that *The Same Scourge* is a faithful picture of the Romans who occupied New Testament Palestine, and of many New Testament figures. Perhaps: certainly I found it less uncomfortable than, say, *The Robe*; but I am always suspicious of up-to-the-minute reconstructions of thought and word—especially in a case where the words so seldom mix and harmonize with the in-

evitable quotations from the Authorized Version. Nor am I sure that the book rightly conjectures how men in the service of Rome felt about the facts and figures of the New Testament story—and without that confidence I cannot wholeheartedly approve what is certainly an interesting novel. This is not to express any doubt either about the author's sincerity or his knowledge of fact and topography. I can only say that the book leaves me with rather the same sense of discomfort as a Passion Play that I lately saw performed in a vast arena up in the mountains of South Dakota by a cast composed partly of professional actors, partly of local country folk.

For six years Jimmy Yeo, formerly messenger in our Moscow Embassy, has been separated from his Nadia. Now Nadia is kidnapped. Hence develops a "Release Nadia" agitation which a variety of people foment for divers reasons, good or less good. John Prebble,

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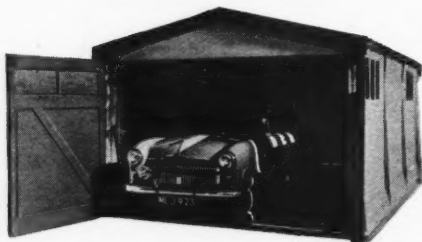
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Novels

himself a journalist, relates the development with proper irony. But—he is too much journalist. He reports the story, and very capably, but he does not go, or take the reader, far enough below the surface. Neither narrative nor characters rise to the opportunities of his book's plot. In short, *The Brute Streets* is easy reading, well supplied with action, spiced with sardonic observation, but too close to cliché to stir the emotions as it should—and could.

I do not doubt that *Private's Progress* is satire based upon fact, though as is often the way, the satire tends to degenerate into buffoonery. I found the earlier passages the most entertaining—the rather half-hearted attempts of a rather colourless Oxford undergraduate to qualify for a commission in the early 1940s, with the fantasies of Army life intertwined with strange goings on in wartime London. It is, I think, a pity that for the sake, I suppose, of verisimilitude (let us hope it is not "integrity" in so lighthearted a tale), Alan Hackney so freely and often employs words and phrases which we all know are part and parcel of Army life, now as in the days of *Tristram Shandy*, but the inclusion of which would make it impossible to read the book aloud.

I have just space to mention *Hell is a City*—a gripping account of how the police of a big provincial city bring to book a gang of thugs, including what amounts to a duel between a policeman and a murderer. There is no fancy Sherlock-stuff about this—Maurice Procter was himself a policeman and knows the business inside out. What is more, he reminds us that policemen have private lives.

MILWARD KENNEDY.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

COLLECTED Poems, 1954 (Cape & Hogarth Press. 21s.) includes everything written in verse by Mr. Cecil Day Lewis except about fourteen pages of *A Time to Dance*, and all but two choruses of *Noah and the Waters*. It is a most impressive collection and it puts the

BOOKS IN BRIEF

writer very high indeed among contemporary poets. Nothing in it is better than the lovely sixth part of *An Italian Visit*.

* * *

Mr. Louis Macneice's *Autumn Sequel* (Faber. 12s. 6d.) is described as a rhetorical poem in twenty-six cantos. It is a sequel to *Autumn Journal* and it excels that poem in technique and in a more assured handling of the subject matter. It is, in fact, one of the most accomplished long poems by a contemporary.

* * *

The "Diaries" of Lewis Carroll were disappointing but they provided useful material for his latest biographer, Mr. Derek Hudson. Dodgson's uneventful, donnish life does not offer a rich quarry, but in *Lewis Carroll* (Constable. 21s.), Mr. Hudson has dealt with a difficult subject sensitively and well. This is a tactful, well written "Life."

* * *

The researches of the last forty years, conducted mostly by American scholars, have induced Mr. Kenneth Young to write *John Dryden: A Critical biography* (Sylvan Press. 21s.). This is a most able and readable study fully substantiating the author's claim that "each age . . . must look for itself at the great figures of the past." Mr. Young is right in calling attention to Sir Walter Scott's brilliant portrayal of Dryden, which is now almost unobtainable. It should be reprinted in a handy edition, if possible with an introduction by Mr. Young.

* * *

In assembling her studies of *Medieval Merchant Adventurers* (Methuen. 30s.) Professor E. M. Carus Wilson presents a picture of English trade and industry in the later Middle Ages. Intended principally for the student and specialist, the book contains a great deal of valuable information.

* * *

Among prisoners'-of-war escape stories *You'll Die in Singapore* (Hale. 12s. 6d.),

by Charles McCormac, takes place as one of the most thrilling and horrific of them all. Taken prisoner on the island the author, accompanied by an Australian, were the only survivors of a party of seventeen who broke away. They made their way via Sumatra and Java to Port Darwin, which they reached five months later.

* * *

In writing *The Poets Laureate* (Bodley Head. 18s.) Mr. Kenneth Hopkins has performed a useful service. Including brief biographies and extracts from the works of the Laureates from Dryden to Mr. Massfield, Mr. Hopkins aims at the general reader and makes no attempt to supersede Professor Broadus's more scholarly work.

* * *

Journey from the Arctic (Hodder & Stoughton. 15s.) is yet another excellent, leisurely travel book, giving Mr. Donald Brown's account of his trip on horseback

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The Bright Young People of the 'Twenties have not been in the news lately, and Mrs. Daphne Fielding, thinking it was time for them to emerge from the shadows, writes of her and their activities in *Mercury Presides* (Eyre & Spottiswoode. 21s.). She has known innumerable well-known people but she is at her happiest when she is writing about Longleat, the home of her first husband.

* * *

The Lovers' Pocketbook (Perpetua. 7s. 6d.) is a charming collection of drawings by Raymond Peynet, edited by Kaye Webb, and with an introduction by H. E. Bates. The humour is not unduly innocent, but it is neither salacious nor cynical.

E. G.

Financial

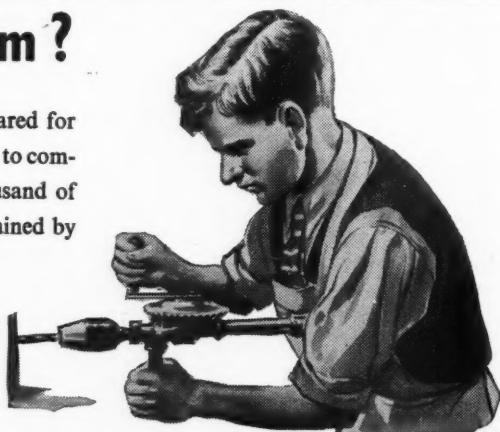
MARKET REVIEW

By LOMBARD

THE Stock Exchange is a sensitive galvanometer: sensitive to rumour and vague suggestion, as well as to economic and political news. About the beginning of December the galvanometer reacted sharply, not to an official hint on future Government policy, but to an article in a leading financial journal by a noted economist. The writer suggested that inflation was perhaps rearing its ugly head and it might be appropriate to use the Bank Rate to prevent the monster from becoming a national menace. As the journal subsequently put it, the words "Bank Rate" were definitely joined together with the word "up." The marriage of these words in a journal widely read in finance and business circles had an immediate effect on the gilt-edged market,

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where prices fell quickly, and in consequence on the industrial market, which followed the lead of Gilts.

After a brief interval, the Government broker appeared in the market to buy, and the trend was temporarily reversed. But the episode is significant as an indication of the true underlying state of markets.

Six months ago there was talk in the City of a possible further *lowering* of the Bank Rate. Since then the rise in share prices has continued almost unchecked, based largely on a succession of good company reports and increased dividends, and yields have in consequence grown thinner. Investors in industrial equities have for some time been searching for companies whose shares had been "overlooked" by buyers, and the search had become increasingly difficult. Full employment, greater production and expanding order books encouraged buyers, particularly those who were looking some way ahead. The market, therefore, remained firm at the higher levels.

With such a background many people were surprised that the published opinion of one writer should have had such an immediately depressive effect on the market. After the brief recovery, the fall continued, and it is now apparent that the reaction was due as much to the inherent condition of the market as to Bank Rate jitters. In fact, the market was ripe for a reaction and professional investors were ready to sell at the mere suggestion that the Government might alter interest rates.

How much further, if at all, will the market weaken, once the normal seasonal influences have passed? The question invites speculation on who makes "the market," and what influences those who make it.

The market is formed by the investing public, who can be divided roughly into two categories: the professionals and the private investors. The professionals invest other people's money—they are the people who manage the funds of insurance companies, investment trusts, pension funds, banks, and so on. The private investor may be someone with £50 or

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£50,000 or more to put into stocks, either for the dividends they yield, or because there is a hope of capital appreciation. The sum total of money passing through the Stock Exchange every week represents, then, the buying or selling activities of people so varied that it is difficult to judge what would influence them all, apart from grave or encouraging political or economic news. One article in a financial paper would not reach the mass of private investors, but it would reach most of the professionals. It is probably true to say, therefore, that the market decline was begun by professional selling, but that in the absence of any official statement to justify it, the fall in prices would not have gone beyond the first stage if private investors had not been ready to take some of their profits—if only for seasonal expenditure. When there are virtually no buyers, comparatively few sellers can give an exaggerated appearance of depression to the market, and buyers were certainly scarce before Christmas.

Once the Christmas and year-end demands on the purse have been met, however, what is the trend likely to be in the next few months?

"We mustn't be afraid of success," said a member of the Government the other day. The phrase must have echoed round the Council Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Could it be taken as a sign that the Chancellor is happy about the state of the nation's economy, and if so, that plans for factory extension and wider sales would be right in line with his policy? Surely, then, the future should be assured for another year, in spite of increased costs and narrower margins of profit. If there were maintenance of profits at the higher levels following greater production, dividends would stay on this level or be increased. Thus the argument might run, in spite of all the experts' utterances on money rates, liquidity ratios, and the rest of their highly technical considerations.

Politics frequently upset the calculations of the economists, and can certainly affect the stock market as powerfully as changes in the economy of the country.

Many of those who must advise on investment policy have been surveying the political scene for indications of probable trends, therefore, in conjunction with such news as the success of the Government's conversion operation, which has gone far towards clearing the decks for 1955 debt financing.

The Queen's Speech could reasonably be taken as an indication that the Government intend to have an election some time this year, since the proposed legislation would not need Parliamentary time beyond the autumn. An election implies uncertainty, and uncertainty upsets the market in securities. At some stage the cloud of election talk will descend on Throgmorton Street, and share prices will be affected. Those who have profits on their investments will be inclined to cash some of them, if they have not already done so. If strikes, Bank Rate changes, or other unsettling influences have not altered price levels, there may not be much change before the Budget. That annual financial milestone is almost certain to mark the beginning of election speculation, bringing some selling with it.

On the policy indicated in the Queen's Speech, and with official figures of future expenditure on roads, it would seem that the shares that would certainly not be sold are those of the companies connected with the construction and maintenance of our roads. The best of such companies are assured, under any Government, of full activity for several years, but it would be hazardous to think that any other groups of industrial companies, with the possible exceptions of those engaged in electronics and atomic energy production, could maintain the present level of sales and profits.

LOMBARD.

RECORD REVIEW

By ALEC ROBERTSON

Orchestral

THE Russian "cultural" invasion which London has been experiencing in various fields of music has given many

Record Review

of us a chance of hearing David Oistrakh, the Soviet Union's greatest violinist, in, amongst other works, the violin concertos, issued on records this month, by Beethoven and Brahms. In the Beethoven, Oistrakh has the benefit of much better recording than he receives in the Brahms, and also of a much better-played orchestral accompaniment (Stockholm Festival Orchestra, conducted by Sixten Erling: Columbia 33CX1194). The Russian orchestra in the Brahms is dull and insensitive and the soloist (fine though his playing, as such, is) never seems to get below the surface of the music. Monarch MWL310 cannot, therefore, be recommended.

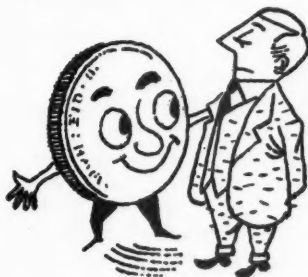
Oistrakh does not perhaps plumb the depths of the Beethoven, but his musically and technically superb performance gives me more pleasure than any other available version on L.P.: though if Kulenkampff's disc had been better recorded it would have been, from the interpretative point of view, a serious rival, and some may prefer the Menuhin, Philharmonia, Furtwängler disc (H.M.V. ALP1100).

Nathan Milstein's performance of the Brahms' Concerto (also issued this month) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg (Capitol CTL7070) is on a bigger scale than the lovely one by Johanna Martzy (Columbia 33CX1165) and is technically more masterly; but the orchestral part lacks the fine style of the Philharmonia Orchestra under Kletzki.

It is a pleasure to find Campoli's most beautiful playing of the Bruch and Mendelssohn Concertos, coupled together on Decca LXT2904. The recording of both is a great improvement on the previous issues of the works by this artist; and in this case, though Milstein competes with the same coupling on Capitol CTL7059 (with the orchestra mentioned above) I would myself plump for Campoli. He has the N.S.O. with Royalton Kisch for Bruch, the L.P.O. with van Beinum for Mendelssohn.

The splendid performance, and excellent recording, of Bruckner's Third Symphony (the one in D, dedicated to Wagner) by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

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THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch, should win new friends for a composer much neglected in this country. It is a lovely work (Decca LXT2967). Anthony Collins, with the L.S.O., continues his Sibelius series with the Third and Seventh Symphonies on Decca LXT2960, the Fourth and *Pohyola's Daughter* on Decca LXT2962. The gay "little" Third Symphony and the noble Seventh—the grandest symphony (in my view) of our time—are finely realized and played: but the Karajan/Philharmonia performance and recording of the Fourth Symphony (Columbia 33CX1125) surpasses this one.

Decca have issued a most interesting collection of music by Nielsen; the Concertos for Flute (Jespersen) and Clarinet (Erikson) on LXT2979, the Fifth Symphony and "Maskarade" Overture on LXT2980, and a selection of music from this opera on LW5132. Mogens Wöldike conducts the Concertos, Thomas Jensen the remaining works, and the

orchestra, in each case, is that of the Danish State Radio. The Flute Concerto and the "Maskarade" music are easy and delightful listening—the Clarinet Concerto and the Fifth Symphony are more difficult—but will be rewarding to those in sympathy with this deeply interesting and original composer.

Also recommended

A wholly delightful record of four of Mendelssohn's Overtures (*Fingal's Cave*, *Fair Melusina*, *Ruy Blas*, *Calm Sea* and *Prosperous Voyage*), admirably played by Carl Schuricht and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Decca LXT2961).

Chamber Music

The Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet, with Joerg Demus as the rather impulsive pianist, give a first-rate performance, very well recorded, of Brahms' F minor Quintet (Nixa WLP5148): David Oistrakh and Lev Oborin make a well-matched pair in Bach's F minor and Schubert's A major violin and piano sonatas. Monarch, unlike the Brahms reviewed above, here achieve a good recording. This is chamber music playing at its best (Monarch MWL311).

Instrumental

Critical opinion varies a good deal about Wilhelm Kempff's playing of Brahms, but I find it nearly always most satisfying. That is the case in this disc of *Fantasias*, op. 116, and *Four Pieces*, op. 119, all of which are well recorded (Decca LXT2935). I have never before heard a woman play Liszt's B minor Piano Sonata: and few performances by men, that I remember, were so true to the spirit of the music and so deeply affecting as this one by Edith Farnadi. She also plays, with much brilliance and musical understanding, Liszt's *Mephisto Valse* No. 1, and *Valse Impromptu* (Nixa WLP5266). Peter Katin displays his dazzling technique in Liszt's *Rigoletto Paraphrase* and C sharp minor *Hungarian Rhapsody*, and his true musical sensitivity in the three *Liebesträume*, with *Hungarian Rhapsodies* 2, 6, 15.

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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Record Review

The recording is splendidly lifelike (Decca LW5134 and LXT2971).

Church Music

Church music is variously represented by a gay and delightful *Messe de Minuit* founded on old French *Noëls* by Marc Antoine Charpentier (Ensemble Vocal de Paris,—André Jouve; London—Ducretet-Thompson, EL93006), the Vienna Boys' Choir in pieces by Pergolesi, Mozart, Schubert and Herbeck, with Ferdinand Jankowitsch as a superlatively good treble soloist (Philips NBR6011), Verdi's *Requiem Mass*, La Scala Orchestra and Chorus under de Sabata, with Schwarzkopf, Dominguez, di Stefano and Siepi (Columbia 33CX1195-6), and the Gregorian Chant *Requiem Mass* for All Souls' Day, sung by the Beuron Monks' Choir (D. G. G. Archive AP13005). (The last disc is one of an imposing *History of Music* about which I will say something next month.)

All of the above records can be heartily recommended with the exception of the Verdi *Requiem*. This has many good moments, but is often poorly balanced and eccentric in tempo. Oralia Dominguez is an outstandingly good contralto.

Opera

There is a welcome reissue of the vintage 1937 Glyndebourne *Don Giovanni*: a superb performance, the re-recording of which hardly betrays its age, and shows up the L.P. Vienna one (H.M.V. ALP 1199-1201). Flagstad, Furtwängler, and the Philharmonia Orchestra are thrilling in the *Closing Scene* from *Götterdämmerung* (with *Siegfried's Funeral Music* and *Journey to the Rhine* on the reverse), and the recording is worthy of them (H.M.V. ALP1016). Maria Callas sings eleven Puccini arias with the Philharmonia Orchestra (Serafin) on Columbia 33CX1204, and makes a variety of sounds ranging from lovely to ugly, but keeps you listening with close attention to her different characterizations.

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